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Sino ang kung sa senado sa San Juan: Si Jinggoy o JV?
PLUS WHO-CARES® Dr. Dy Answers

GMA maintains lead over FPJ in Namfrel tally

By Cynthia D. Balana
and Marvin P. Mardo

ELECTION results from regions where vote tabulation Post 16 area closing found Christian voter the quick count rally by the National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) afternoon, but these were not enough to

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

219 out of 225 members of House are millionaires

By Carlos Pablo

THEY ALL cut their hearts on with the poor but, save for six congressmen, the rest of the 225-strong House of Representatives in the outgoing 12th Congress are millionaires, an official report says.

The six lawmakers not in the millionaires

Wednesday, May 19, 2004 | 36 pages | vol. 19 | no. 161
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Woman beats Isabela gov

ELEKSYON 2004
NAMFREL TALLY

PRESIDENT	VOTES
1. MACAPAGAL, Gloria	4,089,351
2. FPJ, Fernando	4,081,725
3. LACSON, Panfilo	1,283,644
4. ROXAS, Fabian	134,305
5. [illegible]	130,402
VICE PRESIDENT	
1. [illegible]	4,134,067
2. TEJADA, Loren	4,041,838
3. [illegible]	1,281,553
4. PAUL, Ralph	93,076
SENATORS	
1. [illegible]	7,671,271
2. REVILLA, Ramon	6,991,863
3. PANGILINAN, Manuel	5,481,111
4. [illegible]	4,971,737
5. [illegible]	4,767,557
6. [illegible]	4,741,737
7. [illegible]	4,580,105
8. LEPTO, Luis	4,295,606
9. LIM, Alfredo	4,137,343
10. [illegible]	4,080,130
11. MADRIGAL, Gilberto	4,006,366
12. [illegible]	3,868,511
13. [illegible]	3,806,896
14. [illegible]	3,761,547
15. [illegible]	3,656,071
16. [illegible]	3,590,580
17. [illegible]	3,587,296
18. [illegible]	3,583,065
19. [illegible]	3,583,065
20. [illegible]	3,583,065

COMELEC TALLY

SENATORS	VOTES
1. REVILLA, Ramon	10,149,...
2. PANGILINAN, Manuel	10,147,...
3. [illegible]	10,139,...
4. ESTRADA, Jinggoy	10,137,...
5. [illegible]	10,136,...
6. [illegible]	10,135,...
7. [illegible]	10,134,...
8. [illegible]	10,133,...
9. [illegible]	10,132,...
10. [illegible]	10,131,...
11. [illegible]	10,130,...
12. [illegible]	10,129,...
13. [illegible]	10,128,...
14. [illegible]	10,127,...
15. [illegible]	10,126,...
16. [illegible]	10,125,...
17. [illegible]	10,124,...
18. [illegible]	10,123,...
19. [illegible]	10,122,...
20. [illegible]	10,121,...

Ex-radio journalist wins in final Namfrel tally

By Filbarter Visaya Jr.
and Norberto Lubos Bumatay

CAGAYAN CITY—It took a woman in crutches to rock the Dy dynasty's 32-year rule of the province of Isabela.

Both the camps of Mrs. Grace Carlos Padaca and reelectionist Governor Dy Jr are claiming victory in the Isabela gubernatorial race, but according to the unofficial and complete results of the National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections' quick count, Padaca has defeated the scion of one of the most endearing political clans in northern Luzon.

In the Namfrel count covering Isabela's 35 towns and a city, Padaca, 46, a former radio broadcaster, received 228,727 votes and Dy Jr, 196,000—for a margin of 32,726 votes.

The official Commission on Elections canvass of election returns from at least seven Isabela towns has yet to be completed, but on Sunday, the Comelec's postal and official canvassed returns from 27 towns and a city showed that Padaca was leading Dy Jr. 193,426 to 147,869.

Padaca, a polio victim, ran on the platform of "Isabela for all, not for the few" like her predecessor to support farmers, encourage the youth and the elderly, women, people with disabilities, as well as farmers and small and medium businessmen.

"(Leadership) should not be limited to some of those who (have) money or the (ones) people he (or she) (have name) people he (or she) is (how) to (how) to be leaders," she once said in a campaign rally.

But the oldest son and namesake of the late Faustino Dy Sr. thinks it is "premature" to throw in the towel.

"Let us not speculate on who is the winner. The canvassing is not yet finished," he said.

However, he said he would respect whatever would be the decision result.

The provincial canvass was indefinitely suspended on Tuesday after lawyer Bey Dunca, acting

HOMECOMING SAD AND SWEET

The grieving family of Rodrigo Reyes, a seaman killed during a bomb attack in Iraq, attends a last wake session at the cargo hold of the Philippine International Airport, Pasay City, on Monday night at the cargo hold of the Philippine International Airport. Reyes' body was among 32 overseas Filipino workers who returned from Iraq as violence continues to escalate in the war-torn country.

Poll watchdog says FPJ 'dagdag-bawas' victim

By Marvin P. Mardo,
Blanche S. Rivera
and PDI Investigative Bureau

FOR THE first time, a poll watchdog has come forward with the claim that actor Fernando Poe Jr. was a victim of "dagdag-bawas," or vote-shaving and padding scheme.

And, in a separate tweet to the May 10 election count, a private headed to develop the same of the informant who allegedly supplied him with false election statistics, on grounds he was bound by the oath of confidence.

Poe's protection that he had been a victim of vote-rigging in the just concluded polls found echo in Lanao del Sur yesterday.

The chair of the Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) in that province, Hadji Abdullah Dolidig, said the vote-shaving operations against Poe occurred in Ruse municipality.

Election returns showed the candidate of the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino (KNP) won by over 3,000 votes over President Macapagal-Arroyo.

But the certificate of canvass (CoC) showed a different story; it was Ms Macapagal who won the votes by 2,000, Dolidig said.

Dolidig did not tell how the

Tatad slams 'assault' on press freedom

EXILE the 20th anniversary of the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos is considered a "Dark Tuesday" in remembrance of the Commission on Elections for stopping the ABC television network from conducting a quick count of the votes cast on May 10.

"It's a valid assault on our Constitution and an unacceptable infringement of press freedom," Francisco Tatad said yesterday at the daily news briefing of the Kalusugan ng Maglalakbayang Pilipino, of which he is a consultant of candidates.

It was Tatad who announced in a televised broadcast in Spanish, but 1972 the imposition of martial law, the consequent shutdown of the mass media and the arrest of journalists and other prominent personalities.

Gov't buff amid puff, while Asia smokes

Fear of backlash delays fare hike

By Clarissa S. Batino,
DJP Cabacungan Jr.
and Abigail L. Ho

FRAUDS: a public backlash, Malacañang reportedly prompted the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) from issuing yesterday an order allowing jeepneys to raise the minimum fare by P1.50 and ordinary buses by P2 in the first week of June.

A source said that Malacañang wanted to release the order only after President Macapagal-Arroyo would have been proclaimed the winner of the May 10 polls.

LTFRB Chair Elmira Rivera Encarnacion said Monday night that the fare hike order was "for signature" yesterday. However, said there were minor typographical

Who vote could affect Namfrel's unofficial national tally which yesterday showed Ms Macapagal holding a margin of well over 1 million votes against the actor.

Dolidig said Namfrel had also documented similar incidents in at least five other towns but that

FULL TEXT

WEATHER FORECAST

CIRCUIT: Easter Luzon and Bicol Region will be cloudy with slight to very rough seas. The rest of Northern and Central Luzon will have calm sea conditions. The rest of Luzon and Visayas will experience mostly cloudy skies.

ACCU-WEATHER

Metro Manila	Fair	Cebu	Cloudy with rain
Baguio	Rain	Iloilo	Cloudy with rain
Tuguegarao	Rain	Cotabato	Cloudy with rain
Laoag	Rain	Tacloban	Cloudy with rain
Puerto Princesa	Rain	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legaspi	Rain	Davao	Partly Cloudy
Catbalogan	Cloudy with rain	Surigao	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Cloudy with rain	Dipolog	Partly Cloudy

Health alarm raised

ARCHO walking in flooded areas and check that grass of water pose a threat to drinks.

This was the advice of the health department officials to residents in the Bicol region hard hit by typhoon Cindy.

Dr. Perdito Arellano, DOH assistant director said Camarines Sur led the provinces in the most number of cases of leptospirosis, a disease acquired usually through exposure to water contaminated with the urine of infected animals.

He cautioned residents about their water supply and advised flooded areas to use as preventive against water borne diseases like cholera, typhoid fever, diarrhea, and hepatitis, among others.

Apart from health problems, Dindo also caused extensive damage to infrastructure and crops.

The Department of Agriculture said some P32 million worth of farm crops were destroyed by the typhoon in the Bicol and Eastern Visayas regions.

Allany Abrel, director Rep. Jose Sabiola said some 105 hectares of farms were damaged in his district alone.

Engineer Orlando Rocas of the Department of Public Works and Highways, for his part, said it would take two days before they could assess the damage on other areas caused by the typhoon.

Office of Civil Defense Regional Director Ansel Zagala said the number of evacuees also increased, with 66 families for Sorsogon City; Sto. Domingo, Albay; 130 families; Catagaran, Sorsogon, 330 persons; and Naga City, 132.

He said evacuation was one area to Catanduanes to check on reported landslides in two coastal villages on the eastern side of the province and to be landslide-prone by the Mines and Geosciences Bureau - Gil Francis Bravo, Mitchel Jimenez, Wino Jesar Ordoña, Joyce Medilores, Juan Escandor and Romulo Pesto, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Bicol in state of calamity in Dindo's wake

By Juliet Labog-Javellana, Lira B. Salamanca, Christine B. Dayrit, Joey A. Gabieta and Villamor Visaya Jr.

THE DITTER: Bicol region and parts of the Visayas have been placed under a state of calamity by President Macapagal Arroyo to speed up government response to the damage ravaged by strong typhoon Dindo (international code name: 0402) that has killed 68 persons, displaced at least 11,000 others, and damaged crops worth P32.1 million.

The weather bureau said the typhoon was about 205 kms east of Tagaytay, Cagayan and headed to Japan, but another storm with the international code name Dinon was spotted 1,300 kms from Mindanao.

Declared areas of calamity were Catanduanes, Albay, Sorsogon, Camarines Sur and Camarines Norte, as well as Masbate, Northern Samar and Samar's Batac province in the Visayas.

The President said Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita, chair of the National Disaster Coordinating Council, recommended the action after assessing casualty and damage reports from the region.

Most areas of Bicol remained inaccessible as Dindo toppled electricity poles, snapped telephone lines, and caused floods and landslides.

Communication lines dead

"Radio, landline and mobile connections were dead in many areas," said regional police chief Isidro Lasa. "Even our own military and police communications are not working."

Rescuers waited for the weather to clear to airlift food and relief items to Gigmoto Reserve Camp, where about 700 houses have been totally or damaged by landslides in three farming villages since Sunday and communication lines cut.

One radio station said three fishermen died when their boat capsized off the coast of Catanduanes Monts and two people drowned while trying to cross swollen rivers in Camarines Sur. Another eight fishermen were missing in Batan Island.

Three others who had been found as missing Monday were found alive off Leyte province, where they had fled from the storm, coast guard chief Vice Adm. Antonio Domingo said.

Citing initial reports from its field offices, Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo Jr. said 7,420 hectares planted to rice and some 1,075 hectares of corn had been destroyed in Bicol, with Camarines Sur as the worst hit among the region's provinces with crop damage placed at P32.7 million.

The several inland of farmer also sustained substantial damage to crops, infrastructure and private property, the civil defense office said.

Stranded passengers

Government rescuers said more than 11,000 people had been displaced from their homes, while about 15,000 others were stranded as ferry services between Luzon and the several islands were suspended since Sunday.

But around 3,000 people in the Eastern Visayas were able to set sail yesterday morning after the Philippine Coast Guard allowed the bigger ships to set sail. PCG spokesperson Lt. Armand Balilo said most of those stranded were in the Bicol region, Batangas, Mindoro and Quezon.

Power, however, has yet to be restored in the Eastern and Northern Samar provinces.

Ramon Quindoc, National Power Corp. for branch manager for Leyte and Samar said several electric poles were knocked down in the two provinces, but said electricity may be restored this week. With reports from Dale Comtoya, Reuters, AFP, AP

4 die as boat sinks off Cebu

By Jhunna Magallanes
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Four people, including a three-year-old girl, died yesterday afternoon when St. Martin, the pump boat they were riding, sank about a kilometer from the port of Pilar town, Camotes Island, Cebu.

The other fatalities include a pregnant high school teacher, a 20-year-old man on his way to Pilar to attend a fiesta, and another unidentified woman, this is according to Alvin Oliver, skipper of the pump boat Broken Blue, who helped in the rescue operations.

The ill-fated St. Martin left Ormoc City, Leyte for Camotes Island at about 1 p.m. yesterday with at least 100 passengers on board. Strong storm ripped through the wooden pump boat and caused it to sink, said the skipper.

POST-ELECTION REVAMP

15 of 22 Cabinet members submit resignations

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

PETITION of the 22 Cabinet members have tendered their courtesy resignations, with the rest to do so within the week, according to Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo.

Romulo said the Cabinet resignations were in preparation for President Macapagal-Arroyo's expected new term upon her proclamation on June 30.

"Yes, exactly," Romulo said.

"It is traditional and customary when there is a new administration which then of course would be starting June 30. July 1 to give the President a free hand that they submit their courtesy resignation and that is what is being done," Romulo told reporters after the President and some of her Cabinet members had a meeting about typhoon "Imelda."

It was only the third time since the May 10 elections that the President was seen by the Palace reporters.

Romulo said he had no doubt that Mr. Macapagal would emerge victorious.

"I'm personally sure because I've been told by our leaders all over the country that she has a commanding lead," Romulo said.

"I have no doubt whatsoever, in fact this is a good opportunity to state that I think the President would have a majority of at least two million (votes), probably more," Romulo said.

Romulo said the President garnered 11 million votes in her previous electoral battles, which he said was higher than the votes obtained by President Joseph Estrada. Romulo said President Fidel Ramos has a margin of 800,000 while Ferdinand Marcos got 500,000.

"And at that time there was only a two-party system but now there are several parties so I think it's a solid mandate (for the President)," Romulo said.

Romulo said the President would act on the resignations after ten th.

"She of course has to look at all the Cabinet members and she has to review their performance. She wants a Cabinet that is fresh, vigorous and would meet the needs of the future so we will wait for her to make a decision," Romulo said.

Asked if the President would appoint her losing rivals to the Cabinet, Romulo said: "She has indicated that she envisions a government of national unity so you take her word for it."

Romulo praised former Sen. Raul Roco for conceding defeat and that the other candidates should emulate him.

"Oh, yes, definitely. That's democracy and that's why I'd like to commend Secretary Roco for his graciousness and gentleness by behavior and I think we should emulate his example that once the people have spoken, you have seen the numbers, you know you should concede and you should work for the betterment of the country together with the elected President," Romulo said.

GMA, allies hail Roco statesmanship

By Juliet L. Javellana and Christine O. Avendaño

DECLARING she was "humbled by Raul Roco's act of statesmanship," President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday hailed the former Education secretary for conceding defeat and enjoined him and his followers to help her "guard the vote against cabinet forces that are attempting to undermine it."

In a statement she issued after Roco's telephone call on Monday, the President said: "I never doubted for a moment that Raul Roco is a true ally for democracy and freedom, and I shall continue to rely on his firm support and participation... in upholding the sovereign will of the people and the preservation of our democratic system and way of life."

The President earlier asked the Commission on Elections to investigate "specific and substantiated" reports of electoral fraud.

Her spokesperson, Ignacio Bunye, also assured no huge cash reports that Roco's move was part of a deal with Malacañang.

"I'm sure that Secretary Roco studied the situation and made a careful evaluation of the circumstances before he made a decision to concede," Bunye said in a briefing. There was no pressure from Malacañang and Roco's act was confidential, he insisted.

Asked about a Cabinet position for Roco, Bunye said: "The President is open to unity and reconciliation but we don't have any details at this time."

ROCO

Unfounded Macos cite cold it was a personal decision after the other contenders.

A realist

Administration senators also praised Roco, so much for being a statesman or a "realist."

Senate President Franklin Drilon congratulated Roco "for placing national interest over and above partisan politics."

This was echoed by administration senator Gregorio Ilan. Rodolfo Biazon who said Roco's actions contributed to "lessening the tension" in the country.

Biazon said Roco was being sensible when he conceded defeat even if Estrada had received only 38 percent of the votes cast last May 10.

Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. urged other presidential contenders to follow suit.

Majority leader Francis Pangilinan agreed, saying that Roco's act of "humility" and, again, statesmanship, should be emulated by all candidates nationwide.

"For the sake of national unity and political stability, losing candidates should rise above the hurly of the bitter campaign and place the interest of the nation first by conceding," Pangilinan said in a statement.

"That's their call," said Bunye's position.

No big deal

But opposition senatorial candidate Francisco "Kiko" Pangilinan said Roco's action had "minimal impact." He said the standard bearer of Aksyon ng Bayan had "lost here in the running," saying, with poll results showing him so far away from the leading contenders.

Asked to comment on the fact that he rooted for the President, Roco had recognized that she would end up being the winner, Imad said Aksyon's bet was "not in any position to act as arbiter in the real fight between (No. 1 and No. 2)."

Atty. Rodolfo Biazon, dean of the Ateneo University Law School and president of the Association of Law Schools of the Philippines said Roco, with Monday's gesture, proved true to his commitment to the youth and the country's future.

"We expected no less from Senator Roco," Biazon said. "He act... of selflessness (was) a worthy example for future leaders to emulate."

Other administration senior urged the opposition to respect Roco's decision instead of accusing him of colluding with Malacañang all along.

Nacionalist People's Coalition Rep. Joseph Durano of Cebu and Lakas-CMD Rep. Aquilino Pimentel of Iloilo said the opposition was being petty and mediocre for impugning Roco.

The solons chided the Koalisyon ng Magkakaibang Pilipino, saying its expressed suspicion illustrated a "desperation over inconvenience defeat."

Durano, reelected congressman in Cebu's 6th District, also said Roco's act would "hasten the healing process and the country's return to normalcy" after the election. With Michael L. Lino

Real poll watchdogs: Bruno, Genevieve

By Philip C. Tubeza

"BRUNO" and "Genevieve" are helping keep the quick-count center of the National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections safe.

They are not Batasbol robocops. They are bomb-sniffing dogs.

"I have three dogs on 24-hour duty," Namfrel secretary general Guillermo Luz said.

Bruno, a black Dutch Shepherd, and Genevieve, a Golden Retriever, belong to the security agency Batasbol hired to guard the quick count center at the La Salle Greenhills gym in San Juan, Metro Manila.

Bruno and Genevieve have been on duty since the counting equipment was installed at the gym a day before the elections, according to Luz.

The K9s take turns in making the rounds every two hours in sniff out bombs. They would allegedly act down beside any package that contains explosives.

Genevieve and Bruno received media attention after a man reportedly near the radio jamming that the quick count center had received a bomb threat. Luz denied receiving any threat.

"So far as I know, there's been no threat. They would have called me if there was a bomb threat," Luz said.

He said that some media men might have mistaken a phone call from the Commission on Elections on Sunday afternoon as a bomb threat.

Luz said a Comelec official called up at around 4 p.m. Sunday to ask if Namfrel had received a bomb threat. The official made the call after Comelec received a threat that day.

Nevertheless, security at the quick count center has been significant. A police Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team guards the La Salle gate on Ortigas Avenue.

"[The police] offered their help so why would we turn it down? A little more security can't possibly hurt. We have La Salle security, we have Genevieve and Bruno, and we have our own security inside here as we feel safe," Luz said.

He said he would ask the La Salle Brothers to allow Batasbol to remain at the gym for several more days. Batasbol was supposed to transfer to the JPM Building in Mandaluyong after today even if its quick count was not yet finished.

"Because of the problems with [moving the equipment], I've just asked the Brothers just to give us a few extra days rather than have [us] rush out to move equipment [today]," Luz said.

"I have a lot of phone lines and electrical lines in place. If the Brothers so agree, first we will stay here a few more days because I don't want to move equipment at this critical stage," he added.

Luz said that it was during the 1992 elections that Namfrel took the longest time to conclude its quick count. He said the 1992 Namfrel quick count lasted for three weeks.

He said that in other elections, it took Namfrel only 11 days to wrap up its count.

"BRUNO" takes a nap while on bomb-sniffing duty at the Namfrel Quick Count center at La Salle Greenhills auditorium. EC CHANCO

Poll watchdog says FPJ 'dagdag-bawas' victim

From page A1

the victim were local candidates.

In Metro Manila, senatorial price Fe Jim Orbos submitted copies of statements of votes, certificates of canvass and seals to the Commission on Elections to check if they were genuine amid charges of widespread cheating during the elections.

Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos and Election Commissioner Resurrection Borra ruled the documents from Bicam were fake because they were not "robo-sealed" and had the wrong serial numbers.

Apparently, the documents were copied from GoCs in previous elections and Abalos said this could be part of an attempt to discredit the Comelec and destabilize the political situation.

"We are going to refer this to the proper agency so that we can pinpoint the source ... This was likely done, although they knew this could not be used, just to destabilize again," Abalos said.

Pressed by reporters to identify his source, Tiglao said he would not do so because he would be revealing the seal of confession.

"I will be defrocked by my church," said the former Catholic priest, who leads another poll watchdog group called Bantay, composed largely of church militants.

"Nag-uto lagalag at nag-slap daw dun. (It was roaring trigger) The person is wobbled because he also had a rub at it ... He could not free with it," Orbos said of his informant.

It was during that meeting, two days after the elections, that the informant gave him the documents, Tiglao said.

He said he went to the Comelec so that the poll body could verify the authenticity of the documents.

Pembroker Inc. Spokesperson Bernard yesterday filed before the Comelec De Jim Bernard complaint of vote fraud during the last elections.

The KBP candidate, a victim of "dagdag-bawas" in the 1998 elections, surveyed the members and subscribers of the board of canvassers (BoC) of Bayuka, Batangas, of drawing 7,427 votes from his tally.

Pembroker said he was documenting more evidence of vote-cheating against him, particularly in Batangas and Cavite.

Pembroker said the Bicolor statement of votes gave him 6,000 votes from 16 precincts but the figures indicated in the tally for "grand total" dropped the last zero and he ended up with 600 votes.

Pembroker alleged that Bandoy had chair Dona Sagad, vice chair Jaelle Sotejo, secretary Mirin Magday, and tabulators Clem Infante and Alvin San Pedro violated an electoral law, promises on vote tampering.

The offense is punishable by a jail term of one to six years.

Reacting to opposition charges, the Batangas4 administration warned the opposition against using "isolated discrepancies" to back its allegations that the elections were rigged.

"It is unfortunate that some politicians are running behind Commissioners in the election protests into an illusion of general fraud," presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said in a statement.

Justice Secretary Simeon de Gracia issued a stern warning against "certain persons, groups, organizations, firms or entities" broadcasting false election results, and threatened legal action for endangering public order or causing damage to the state.

Anatomy of fraud

Akyatan ng Pag-Asa's losing senatorial candidate Frank Chavez lamented the lessons with documentation which he said were at the heart of an "anatomy of fraud" in many a Batasbol election.

Chavez said his supposedly Malacañang-endorsed senatorial aspiration doubled a confidential pre-election survey on voter preferences conducted in mid-February. He said he was able to obtain a copy of the survey.

If elections were held at the time, survey results showed that the would win 44 percent of the vote and his Batasbol 24 percent.

It was then that the plan to cook the election figures using surveys as a template, the Pag-Asa bet alleged.

He alleged that the administration also was behind the massive disenfranchisement of about 900,000 voters.

The plan supposedly called for, among other things, election officers "to help tip the canvassing by releasing hampered or blank certificates of canvass and election returns."

Chavez added: "Election officers, election officers! In Bataan, Quezon, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija and the districts in Quezon City were murdered, relieved or frozen."

Military commanders and police officers in parts of Mindanao were to help rig the vote and those "who refused to do the bidding of Malacañang were also relieved or frozen."

The alleged operation also called for building the canvassing at secrecy in areas where Mr. Macapagal was losing.

In areas where there was "a lot of chaos or lawlessness," canvassing was to be held in military camps, Chavez alleged.

219 out of 225 ...

From page A1

slots are all party-list representatives, according to the official Lower House report, based on the members' statements of assets, liabilities and net worth as of Dec. 31, 2003.

The six congressmen and their net worth: Cagayan mines fatalities: Jose Gonzaga (Bayan Muna), P11,811,000; Mayor Jaya Ilgaya (Akbayan), P725,000; Dioscoro Rodanilla (Alliance Bayanihan), P533,673.

Mayo Antonino (Aksi Mo), denied, P420,000; Raphael Dadato (Bayan Muna), P233,000; and Joel Virador (Bayan Muna), P96,500—the poorest in the list.

The six richest are Cynthia Villar (Independent, Las Piñas), P501,205,340; Victor Yambing (Lakas, Malabon), P203,926,295; Augusto Egbert Cuban, Bohol), P97,156,600.

Rolled: Mariss D.F. Quezon), P6,867,137,827; Abdullah Dimaporo (Lakas, Lanao del Norte), P5,96,000,989; and Jack Enrile (Independent, Cagayan), P93,682,150.

Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. was 23rd on the list with a net worth of P55,352,661.

Rodriguez "Bernas" Aquino (Ifugao) and Teofisto "Tito" Guingona III (Bataan), sons of municipal buster Sen. Serging "Siron" Aquino, ranked 116th, with P12,611,988.

Just behind him, at 117, was Irene Marcos-Araneta, Bongbong Marcos, a daughter of the late dictatorship Ferdinand Marcos. She declared a net worth of P12,610,000.

Ronaldo Zamora (Puwersa ng Mas, San Juan), who served as the campaign manager of presidential candidate Jose Pardilla Lacson, had a net worth of P9,000,000.

Rep. Francis Escudero (NPC, Sorsogon), the personal spokesperson of actor and presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr., declared P4,533,448.29 in his net worth.

The sons of businessman Edmundo "Sunday" Cinco—Jesse, 8, and different of wrestler Mark (NPC, Pangasinan) had P74,034,476.01 and Carlos (NPC, Negros Occidental) P1,946,201.67.

Both Mark and Carlos were topped by Cojuangco's supposed favorite nephew, Gilberto Teodoro Jr. (NPC, Tarlac), who had P76,260,764.87.

Showbiz Gretchen (NPC, Valenzuela City), a son of "photo king" William Gatchalian, had the largest holding, totaling P9,9C,730,000. The net worth was P13,257,852.42.

Of the 20 party-list representatives, first Bernardo Lotilla (Citizens' Battle Against Corruption) was the richest, with P81,051,499.92.

Lotilla was followed by party-list Rep. Rene Velante (Bukay), a son of El Shaddai leader Bro. Mike Velarde, with P23,082,303.98.

Lotilla's party mates, Emmanuel Joel Villanueva (CIBAC), a son of evangelist and presidential candidate Eddie Villanueva, had a net worth of P4,865,670.

Two congressmen who ran for seats in the Senate in the May 10 elections—Carlos Padilla (COC Nuevo Ecija) and Didagen Dilangalen (Puwersa ng Mas, Maguindanao)—declared net worths of P9,968,868 and P17,189,888, respectively.

Retired police generals won't join destabilization plot

By Christian V. Esguerra, Alcuin Papa and Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau

[illegible] police generals yesterday insisted that they would not join in any purported plot by their former comrades in the military to destabilize the government amid charges that Malacañang allegedly orchestrated massive fraud in the recent elections.

Officials belonging to the Philippine National Police Retirees Association Inc. (PNRA) are "under strict instructions not to participate in any destabilization movements," said retired police Director Guillermo Doromidez, PNRA chairperson.

Police spokesperson Chief Supt. Leo Laviña yesterday said the PNP was closely monitoring and assessing the purported destabilization threat.

At least two retired PNP generals were seen with the group of retired military officials going around Mindanao and other parts of the country.

One of the generals is a former PNP chief while the other is closely identified with the Council on Philippine Affairs.

Former Army chief Jejomar Cruz Erorita, said to be a key member of the "pro-Poe" group, yesterday declined to comment on the allegations.

In an interview last week, De los Santos admitted that he and some 300 retired military generals and colonels were tasked going around the country. But he clarified that this was meant only to help ensure peaceful and credible elections.

De los Santos claimed he and his group had documented some of violations of elections found and had subsequently called the attention of the Commission on Elections.

He said his group includes former Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Fidelito Nanamea, former Southern Chief Generoso Paz, ex-Marine commander Rosalio Bellos, former National Intelligence Coordinating Council head Romulo Cruz and former Cabinet-ranking officials Teresa Oreta and Dick Migriño.

But Cupa-Bayo Bayan Say Say, not yesterday advised retired generals to first prevent proof of alleged poll cheating.

Report said even the retired generals show solid proof of cheating, "then I myself will hardly see to it that we will oppose this."

Sources said Cupa lacks time to procure evidence of cheating in the last elections which favored the administration. "We would present it to the public once we have verified the information."

Sources also denied police intelligence reports linking Cupa to the alleged destabilization plot.

"I fully deny the malicious accusations of the PNP. They should instead concentrate on their own acts in trying to influence the election," he said.

In this development, the military yesterday launched a manhunt for Col. Jose Gatma, deputy commander of the Army's 9th Infantry Brigade based in Jolo, who has been reportedly moving around Mindanao to sow destabilization.

Southern Command chief Lt. Gen. Roy Rosales told the house in the classified text included Col. Gatma failed to report to his superior.

Active military officers and enlisted soldiers are banned from participating in the elections except to cast their votes.

China blasts Vietnam for airstrip renovation in Spratlys

BEIJING... China Tuesday blasted a Vietnamese decision to start renovating an old airstrip on an island in the disputed Spratly archipelago, saying it violated Chinese sovereignty.

"Vietnam's activity on the occupied islands and reefs is a serious violation of China's territorial sovereignty," foreign ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao told a regular briefing just days before a visit by Vietnam's premier to China.

He criticized the move as "illegal" and said "historical and legal proof" had demonstrated China's "incontestable sovereignty over the Spratly Islands and the adjacent waters."

Vietnam began work last month in the South China Sea on bringing a disused 600-meter (2,000-foot) runway on the Big Spratly island back into working order, and it is expected to become operational by the end of this year.

The Chinese foreign ministry's remarks came ahead of the start Thursday of a four-day state visit by its Vietnamese Prime Minister Phan Van Khai, but Liu declined to specify if the airstrip would be directly addressed in his talks.

"They still have frank discussions about the issues that remain between the two countries," Liu said.

The rebuilt airstrip will be used to bring supplies to the Spratlys, just as Vietnam runs a boatload of sightseers to the islands each month, enraging neighbors with competing claims to the islands.

China and Vietnam, along with Taiwan, Malaysia, the Philippines and Brunei, lay claim to areas around the Spratlys, which straddle vital shipping lanes and fishing grounds and are believed to contain vast oil and gas reserves.

Except for Brunei, all the claimants have military presence, but scattered across the archipelago of more than 300 islets, reefs and atolls.

In the past, the squabbling has erupted into violence. The most serious incident occurred in 1988 when Chinese and Vietnamese naval forces clashed at Johnson Reef, resulting in the deaths of 70 Vietnamese navy personnel.

The communist neighbors clashed again in the Spratlys in 1992, and since then there have been numerous other incidents between the six claimants. AFP

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Corrections

IN THE story "Home remedies to GMA" of the May 18 issue, the reporter would like to make the following corrections:

• Imelda Cybercentral candidate Maria Cuenia Cielo Pechon is not "schoolchum-bound," as described in the story. Pechon, who is stricken with polio, moves around using crutches.

• Cotabato City Mayor Caesar Dy is a son of the late Congressman Piodurus Dy. Mayor Dy is a brother of redistricted Isabela Gov. Faustino Dy Jr., not the governor himself, as originally reported.

Ping to continue crusade

By Norman Bordadora and Armand Nocum

CROSSING to continue his campaign against corruption after his failed presidential bid, Sen. Panfilo Lacson has vowed to launch a movement against Jose Pidal, whom he considers a symbol of graft and corruption in the country.

Lacson, who alluded to the Senate that Vice Gochioan Jun-Miguel Arroyo owned the silkworm Jose Pidal bank account, said true this time, the campaign would go beyond the personal and focus on what Pidal has started to symbolize.

"Jose Pidal is not just a person but the value system of corruption. That is why what we have been explaining to the people when we were campaigning," the senator said in an interview with the ABS-CBN News Channel.

Lacson said it is no longer important when President Macapagal-Arroyo intends to do which he declared, because the senator will keep his peace if ever she gets elected to a full six-year term.

"Like I said, it's not the person. I'd like to be convincing. If we go back to the past, then we won't get anywhere. We need to innovate," he said.

"We are planning to have a movement—a group against graft and corruption...just so we could convince what we've started (against corruption)," he added.

Lacson will stay in the opposition, but he is willing to cooperate with the new government on an anti-graft legislation.

People assume that being in the opposition means always being against. But would prefer the change. When the agenda is good, and I see they're sincere, I will give my support," he said.

Big fish

Meanwhile, watchdog group Plunder Watch has dared the Palace to finally catch a big fish to prove once and for all that the government is serious in fighting graft and corruption, instead of merely hitting "sardines."

Unless that is done, the creation of a Presidential Commission on Salary Enforcement (PCSE) will have no impact except to add another "layer" to government, said Plunder Watch convenor Dr. Carolina O'Ayudio.

"The PCSE program will go the way of the roads-mounted lifestyle check that only targeted middle-level bureaucrats," she said.

A year after its creation, the program under Malacañang's Transparency Group has yet to suspend or dismiss a cabinet member for graft.

The Presidential Anti-Graft Commission earlier recommended the dismissal and filing of graft charges against businessman Bernardo Perez and Herman Bergante, but the Palace's Committee of Peers reversed the rulings.

"They should catch the big crooks," Ayudio said, and dared the Presidency to go after Cabinet men like Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation Chair Efraim Genuino, who was recently linked to alleged multi-million irregularities in Pagcor.

She recalled that Ms. Macapagal merely asked Pagcor officials to answer the charges and open their financial books for review.

Grade schools reopen June 7, HS on June 21

CLASSES in public elementary schools will open on June 7, while those in public high schools will open two weeks later on June 21.

The delayed start of high school classes is reportedly due to the pay high school "bridge program" that would be implemented this school year.

The Department of Education announced the school calendar for this year in a memo dated April 2.

Public elementary schools should start classes on June 7, Monday. Classes should end on April 1 next year.

The DepEd pushed back the start of classes in public high schools to June 21, Monday.

Classes should end on April 22 next year.

Private schools may deviate from this calendar, provided they do not open earlier than the first Monday of June (June 7), the DepEd said.

Private school owners were told to notify the DepEd in advance of their school calendar and make sure they complete the minimum number of class hours and class days.

One DepEd official told the Inquirer that they moved the start of high school classes to June 21, to give time for adjustments to the bridge program.

The DepEd has announced that incoming freshmen in public high schools have to undergo an extra year of bridge classes should they fail their high school readiness test.

For a year, these students have to review their elementary English, Science and Math.

They have to pass the bridge class before they can pass the regular high school course.

The test is scheduled for May 24 in public high schools.

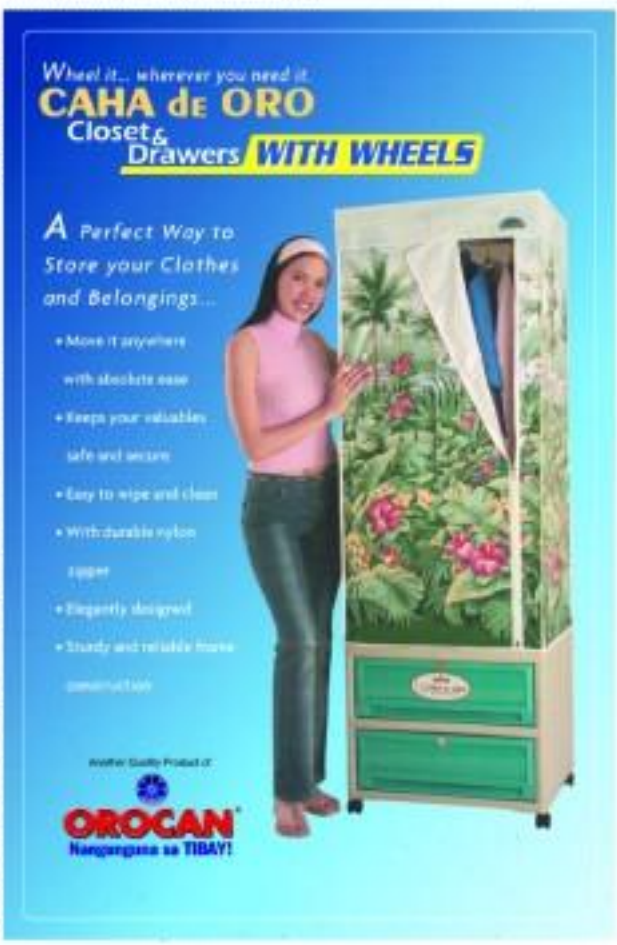
Also for the first time the DepEd mandated a five-day break after the second quarter exams.

For high schools, the five-day break would be from Nov. 8 to 12.

Secretary Edilberto de Jesus, in his memo, said the break would be used to "upgrade/enhance the competencies of school teachers" through school training programs.

During the break however, students would be given assignments, projects and research work which would be part of their lessons.

Christmas break would begin on Dec. 22, and classes would resume on Jan. 3, Monday.



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Fear of backlash delays fare hike

From page A1

cost, it would create a big political backlash so they were trying to delay the release of the order. There was a request to delay it until after the proclamation [of the new president]," said an official of a transport group.

The expected LTFRB order would raise the minimum passenger base to P5.50 for the first 4 km and P1 for each additional kilometer, higher than the 20 centavos per succeeding kilometer sought by jeepney groups. Jeepneys currently charge 60 centavos for every succeeding kilometer.

The fare increases for jeepneys and buses are more generous than what transport groups are asking for. The fare hike petition filed by jeepney and bus groups covered the first 5 km.

But the LTFRB would apply the increase to the first 4 km following an adjustment of the minimum distance coverage starting April 1, according to sources.

The expected hike would come barely a month and a half after the government adjusted the base distance, effectively raising the minimum fare by 7% overnight.

Taxi fare

Not only jeepney and bus operators but also taxi owners are seeking a fare increase. The association of taxi operators has asked the LTFRB to increase the flag down rate to P40 from P25.

The Association of Taxi Operators in Metro Manila, which has 3,000 members, warned an increase either in the flag down or the flag rate for the first 500 metres by P15. The group also sought a 50-centavo increase for every succeeding 200 metres from the current P2.

Lemuel Raval, president of the taxi operators' group, said an adjustment in taxi fare would help them cope with the continued rise in fuel prices that had gone up by 100 percent since year 2000, the last time taxi fares increased.

On Monday night, Bautista said, "The order is for signature [tomorrow]. But it would only take effect 15 days after publication in a newspaper of national circulation."

Bautista said the LTFRB would approve the fare hike petition of both jeepneys and buses. But she refused to give any details.

The source pointed out that transport groups had agreed not to demand a fare hike until after the elections. Further delays could force the transport sector to stage a strike.

Senator Manuel Villar, president of the Federation of Drivers and Jeepney Operators of the Philippines, said that waiting until after the proclamation would be "too much."

"The jeepney groups could not wait for long, anyway, in Chairman Bautista and, it would only take either 15 days after publication or it would only be implemented by June," said Manuel. Pepdap is the largest jeepney group with more than 200,000 members, taxi nationwide.

Diesel now costs P18.05 per liter although jeep and taxi owners are given a P1 to P3 per liter discount. Another round of oil price increase is expected next month.

Oil price hikes

Ms. Mangaoang-Aca appealed to the consumers to refrain all companies to hold off further increases in pump prices for three to four weeks apparently to stop adding fuel to a issue politicized massively while awaiting the results of the May 10 election.

Presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said that energy secretary Vicente Perez "is the other ego of the President" was empowering the government in ongoing talks with the oil companies to persuade them to maintain those prices as current levels.

Unless and Shell raised the prices of gasoline, diesel and kerosene by P1 per liter on Saturday, followed by Total (Philippines) Corp., Eastern Petroleum Corp. and Flying V the next day.

Seaoil Petroleum Corp. and Unioil Group of Companies implemented a similar price increase on Monday. Petron Corp. jacked up its gasoline, diesel and kerosene prices by P1 per liter shortly after midnight. Petron also raised the price of its cooking gas by P1 per kilogram in P11 per cylinder.

Raul Concepcion, Consumer and Oil Price Watch chair, said another oil price increase would likely be implemented by the first week of June.

The fuel price increases are expected to raise transport fares and the cost of basic goods and services.

Analysts warned that a series of fuel price hikes during the same counting period could have public opinion against Ms. Macapagal, who has been busy portying herself as the top poster on the May 10 election results.

Congress will begin the official count of votes for president and vice president on May 24. Senate President Franklin Drilon said a winner could be declared early next month.

The Commission on Elections, on the other hand, is expected to wrap up its official count of votes for senatorial candidates in the next three to four weeks.

Bunye said Ms. Macapagal remained focused on her governance duty as protest the issues and matters of the people "even amid the pressure-political campaign."

Oil prices at 13-year high

Bunye said the move to ask oil players to delay their price adjustment was agreed upon during a meeting of the Cabinet Oversight Committee on Internal Security on Monday.

At the meeting, Perez explained the unavailability of the fuel price increases in view of soaring prices of crude oil in the world market but that recently hit a 13-year high.

The benchmark Dubai crude climbed to a month-to-date average of $34.31 per barrel, $2.64 higher than its April average of $31.68 per barrel. Dubai crude cost $36.22 per barrel as of May 17.

Prices of finished products based on the Mean of Platts Singapore have brush also continued to rise, with unleaded gasoline registering a month-to-date average of $38.93 per barrel and diesel, $40.36 per barrel.

Perez said a meeting of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries on June 3 would likely increase another crude price increase would continue.

Bunye said Cabinet officials also discussed other measures aimed at mitigating the impact of rising fuel costs on consumer items and the prices of basic commodities.

He said the Cabinet was considering expanding the number of gasoline stations (currently at 200 stations) that sell discounted diesel.

"The Cabinet is asking consolidated, coproducers and coordinators/importers to study the impact of any increase on the prices of prime commodities," Bunye said.

GLOOMY GLO
President Macapagal appears to be in a pensive mood during a briefing at the Palace on the destruction wrought by Typhoon Dinala in the eastern part of the country. MALACAÑANG

Power co-op group leads party-list race; Bayan close behind

By Martin F Manlo

THE ASSOCIATION of Philippine Electric Cooperatives (Apec) continued to lead other groups in the party-list race over yesterday, garnering 30,402 votes or 24.23 percent of the votes counted at the Commission on Elections' national canvass.

Most of the votes came from Region 4-B, in the provinces of Romblon, Marinduque, Mindoro Occidental and Mindoro Oriental, where it obtained 12,815 votes.

It was followed by the militant group Bayan Muna, which got 18,981 votes or 6.66 percent of the total votes counted so far for the party-list groups.

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Gov'ts huff and puff, while Asia smokes

From page A1

The well-worn threat of an early death having apparently been shrugged off by smokers as a small price to pay for the pleasures of the weed, Manila Lumpur is targeting their wives.

Men will become impotent, women will get wrinkles and you'll all get horrible yellow teeth, Malaysia's pollsters are told in a series of new ad, environment chief Adnan Mansor said.

In Japan, 'marriage on cigarette packets take a gender turn': "There is a clear that it can damage your health, so let's be careful not to smoke too much. Let's obey smoking manners."

Despite the new approach, the percentage of Japanese who light up has been falling for about a decade to a record low of 30.3 percent, reflecting a worldwide trend toward less smoking, according to health researchers.

But poorer countries in Asia reflect instead a World Health Organization (WHO) warning that "tobacco and poverty are inextricably linked," with 7% percent of the world's smokers living in developing nations.

In Indonesia, more 70 percent of the population smoke. The government, which raised $2.9 billion last year from excise tax...almost all of it from cigarettes—does little to discourage them.

Instead it hopes to achieve an increase in excise tax income—not from increasing the retail price for cigarettes, but through increased output by the tobacco industry.

Heavy taxation

Heavy taxation of cigarettes, which has long been a major weapon usedby richer countries to help wean their smokers from the habit, would have another positive effect in poor countries.

But while a packet of 20 Marlboro cigarettes costs $3.60 in Singapore, it costs just 64 cents in Indonesia.

Huge tobacco tax increases, along with a ban on smoking in bars, have been credited with cutting the number of adult smokers in New York from 2002 to 2003 to just 19.3 percent, according to recent surveys commissioned by the city.

But on smoking rates fell through out the Western world, they are increasing in Asian countries, such as China. While many governments have taken non-stops toward discouraging smoking, they often amount to little more than lip service.

In Pakistan, a ban on smoking in public places which came into effect in June last year is rarely observed, despite provision for fines of up to $1,700 for repeat offenders.

Even the threat of three months in jail for those selling cigarettes to minors—possibly one of the world's toughest penalties—is ignored.

India, which has 260 million tobacco users, outlawed smoking in public places (including bars, police etc) they lack the manpower to enforce it.

Instead, consumers pay off cops officials. Smokers...who make up nearly 50 percent of the male population—are more likely to be given the nod to smoke, while others reminded to "no-smoking areas" at the back.

China's efforts

China, where 320 million smokers represent about a quarter of the world's total, makes some effort to stub out the habit, such as banning advertising in newspapers and on television, but a nonsmoking women could would be considered bizarre.

China is the world's largest producer and consumer of tobacco, and last year the industry paid 380 billion yuan ($US 3 billion) in taxes.

Astonishing campaigners argue that such income is offset by the enormous price of tobacco use through health care costs, lost productivity and premature deaths, pointing to the fact that in the same year a million Chinese died from smoking-related illnesses.

The WHO says it is not only natural of countries but family budgets, which are hurt by the costs of smoking. It wants curbs to tobacco, for instance, banned that smokers spent their money on tobacco than on education and health care.

In the Philippines, smokers are estimated to spend 20 percent of their household income on tobacco. The government this year ordered that all tobacco products carry health warnings, and it banned celebrities from endorsing cigarettes.

One of the region's poorest countries, Bangladesh, ratified this month the WHO's convention on tobacco control which commands it to pursue a range of antismoking legislation.

In the past, smoking had been seen as a low priority in a country beset by poverty. But, delighted activists say, the government now recognizes that the rise of the gun hand in hand.

"Unfeminine"

Social pressures have kept smoking rates low among women in Asia, however, a effect seen as "unfeminine." but WHO reports are considerable suggesting increased smoking among young, affluent urban women in some countries.

Which is apparently why Malaysian health authorities have brought wrinkles into its new campaign, quoting US research that "women smokers have more facial wrinkling than nonsmokers."

Whether that and the threat to make them unattractive to their dads will be more effective than telling them they will die of cancer remains to be seen.

Experience in the West points to government picking the pockets of smokers as the best way to get them to quit. New York health officials say they believe the decline in smoking there has been caused primarily by sharply higher tobacco taxes, not bans or health warnings. AFP

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HK judge rejects gov't bid to stop RP maid's residency suit

HONG KONG—Hong Kong's government could find itself forced to stop a Filipino maid's request for residency in a court battle that could have implications for thousands of foreign workers here.

Hong Kong typically requires foreigners to live here for seven years to get permanent residency, but it doesn't allow foreign domestic helpers to count the time they work here toward residency.

Zoilo Ruiz has lived here for 13 years—11 of them working as a maid—and recently sought residency but was rejected.

Ruiz then filed a lawsuit in the high court that says the rules unfairly discriminate against maids. Ian Young, Ruiz's legal judge Michael Hartmann to throw out her case.

The judge refused on Monday, thought to mid-May, to ill government her claim for a legal referral that clarifies residency matters. Ruiz's lawyers said by telephone on Tuesday.

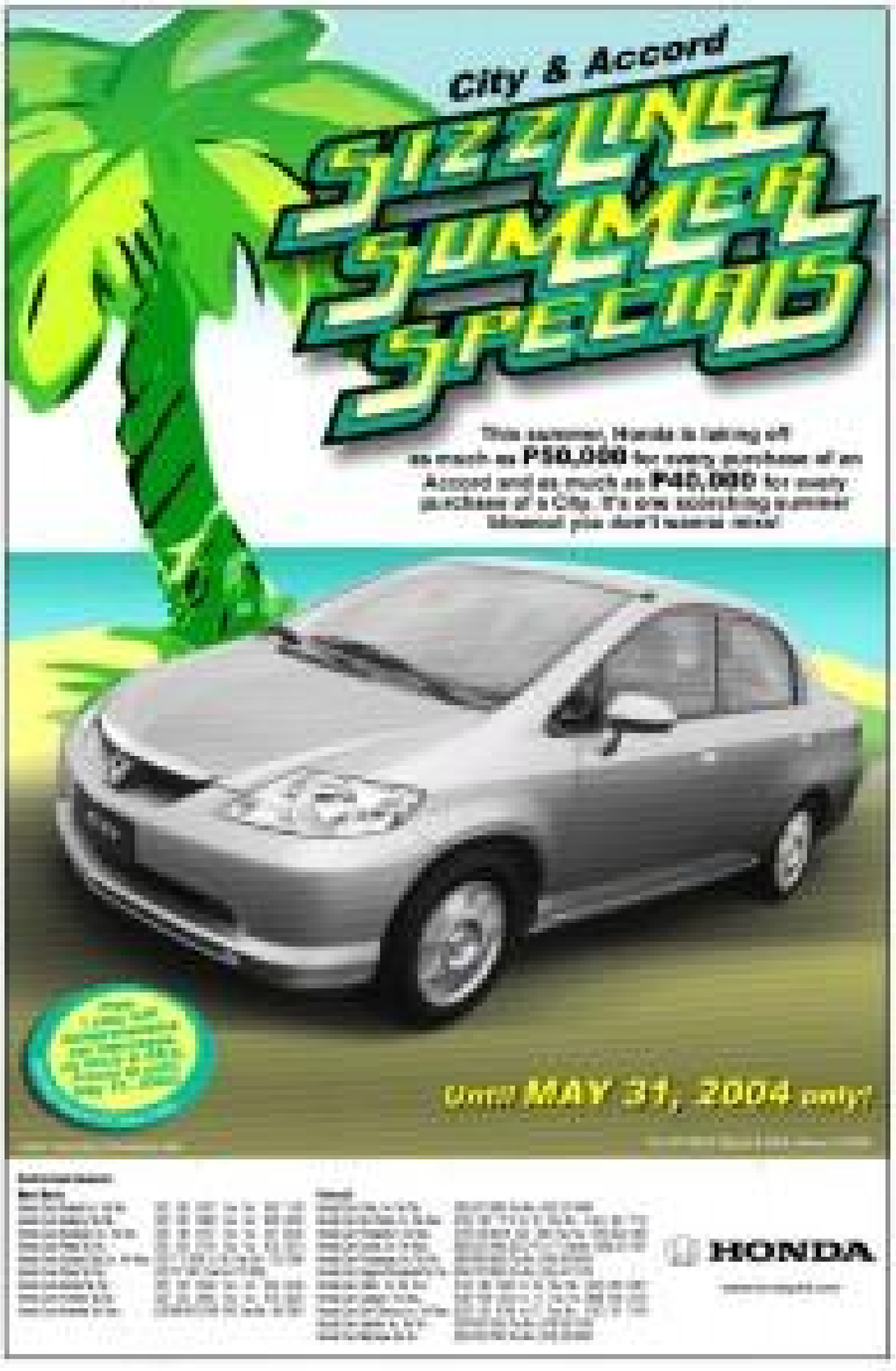
Hartmann said Ruiz the can come back to court if she loses before the referral, said Anson Kaouna, the meaning of the law Ruiz representing Ruiz.

Ruiz, who is 34 and a native of Nueva Ecija province, is now staying in Hong Kong on a visa.

The Hong Kong government wants to avoid a situation where thousands of overseas workers have could seek residency, but the Immigration Department said most declined any immediate comment Tuesday on Ruiz's case.

The foreign workers include more than 200,000 maids, Most are Filipinos, with smaller groups from Indonesia, Thailand and Nepal.

AP



Woman beats Isabela governor

GIANT KILLER: Ma. Gracia Cielo Padaca (far right) poses with Isabela farmers during her campaign for governor of the area-rich Isabela province.

provincial doctor supervisor, and schools division superintendent Nicolas Tumamao, secretary of the provincial canvassing board, resigned for varying reasons.

Another cause of delay was the method of Dy. It is known in Isabela elections circles as a failure to get fewer votes than the canvass of returns from Cauayan town was delayed last week because of charges of rigged results.

In a press conference on Monday, Mayor ng Pag-asa municipal board of canvassers Ronald Cortez said Padaca would "get justice."

Reyes said the case of Padaca, a candidate of his party, deserves immediate action because "the issuance of [the Macapagal's] commitment to the rule of law."

Hard will to crack

The political dynasty that Padaca took on has been a hard nut to crack.

Dy Sr., known as Lakay Tito, started in 1963 as Cauayan municipal. He was mayor of Cauayan for nine years and governor of Isabela from 1972 to 1986 and from 1988 to 1992.

He retired in 1992 and gave way to his son Benjamin, who handily won the gubernatorial seat.

It was Dy Jr.'s father's death in October 1995. Dy Sr. made sure that his sons would easily emerge victorious in electoral fights, by running either unopposed or against "tokhal" or "stepping-stone" candidates.

But the May 10 elections saw some of Dy Jr.'s in-laws, Mayor Amado and Benjamin Dy Jr., a brother and a nephew, in the fight for

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town mayor in San Mariano and Angadanan, respectively, and Hakim Dy Bello, a niece, in the race for councilor in Cauayan City.

On the other hand, his other brothers, Faustino III, Caesar and Napoleon were re-representative of Isabela's third district, Cauayan mayor, and Alicia mayor, respectively.

Undaunted

In 2001, Padaca ran for Congress against Rep. Faustino Dy III, Dy Jr.'s brother, and lost.

Before that she spent 14 years as secretary of the old NEC Board for Region 2 (Cagayan Valley), and worked as an accountant in a Makati-based company.

The experience did not daunt her from going up against another Dy this year.

Padaca began braced the campaign trail with the help of some lawyers of Isabela's united opposition, such as Rep. Edwin Ilagan, a rival of the Dys, and some Church

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leaders and laypersons.

Her detractors said she was a hamaka candidate who would not be able to withstand a province-wide campaign because of her physical disability. But she proved them wrong.

Mighty machinery

In a campaign rally in Ilagan town, Padaca declared that she wanted to stop the Dys' rule of more than three decades.

"The very few concessionaires have run by rote and ruined to the mighty political machinery of the politicos-Dys," she said, adding that she had made the "supreme sacrifice" of "facing an awesome threat and undergoing family suffer."

She said she was presenting herself as someone whom the people of Isabela could identify with, and that they would "support the fight for true democracy" in the province.

Padaca said it was the wonder of God that had given her strength and comfort "during these times when I, a poor, physically handicapped woman, am at the forefront fighting the hated and well-entrenched powers in the province."

"Your Lord as encounter a lot of trials and obstacles. Opponent a stronger person, not easily daunted by challenges," she said.

"Since always I felt there is no one-time more powerful and faithful to cling to but God. I have lived a life that is an ISO of war and love of time that I should not disappoint Him with the things I do."

Padaca, who is unmarried, said she considered her parents, both retired public schoolteachers, and her sisters and nephews the most important people in her life.

"Every day," she said, "they remind me that I should work for the things that are essential — love, truth, justice and freedom."

Power and wealth

Padaca's opponent is synonymous with power and wealth in Isabela.

How the second date of the Nacionalist People's Coalition, Dy Jr. served for three terms as congressman of Isabela's second district before he ran for governor in 2001.

Before he ran for public office, he served as general manager of family-owned corporations Isabela Wood and Development Corp. from 1972 to 1983 — an agri-business firm from 1981 to 1986, and Asiafo and Co. Inc., a construction firm, from 1989 to 1995.

As a congressman, Dy Jr. was a member of the powerful Commission on Appointments. He chaired the House committee on national defense and was vice chair of the health, foreign affairs and transportation and communications committees.

He was also a member of the House committees on appropriations, census, agriculture and food, games and amusements, public order and safety and ways and means.

He has served as campaign leader in his siblings since their bid for the 1992

GMA maintains lead over FPJ in Namfrel tally

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counter the votes from President Macapagal-Arroyo's bailiwicks in the Visayas.

The presidential race has been witnessed closely as Ms. Macapagal-Arroyo and Poe hauled on the 4 p.m. Namfrel tally, which showed the former widening her lead over the latter to 83,483 precincts, or 38.58 percent of the 216,362 election precincts nationwide.

Ms. Macapagal racked up a total of 3,489,261 votes, giving her a formidable lead of 3,407,040 over Poe who had 4,081,702 votes.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson was a far third with 1,283,624 votes. He was followed by Sen. Eddie Villanueva with 734,000 votes and Raul Roco with 602,452 votes.

In the vice presidential race, Sen. Noli de Castro, Ms. Macapagal's running mate, was leading by 1,301,279 votes over first Sen. Loren Legarda. Roi's running mate De Castro had 6,044,908 votes and Legarda, 4,961,600.

Poe was ahead of Ms. Macapagal by 453,645 votes in Southern Tagalog, by 59,029 votes in Metro Manila and by 47,282 votes in Cagayan.

However, his gains were not enough to overturn Ms. Macapagal's lead of 1,111,899 votes in Western Visayas and 1,009,264 in Central Visayas.

Ms. Macapagal was still the topmarcher in General Luna, Siesa, northern Mindanao, Caraga and Region 17 or the Overseas Filipino.

But Poe was leading in nine of the 17 regions. Ms. Macapagal was ahead in eight regions.

Among the vice presidential candidates, De Castro got the highest number of votes in Ilo Macapagal's bailiwicks in the Visayas, in the supposed bailiwicks of the opposition in Mindanao, and in the Overseas Vote.

But Legarda was leading him in the Bicol, Central Mindanao and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

Metro Manila for FPJ

Metro Manila remained the bailiwick of the opposition with both Poe and Legarda leading in the tallies.

In the senatorial race, the votes of Sen. Roxas reached 7,475,221, at 1,434,248 votes higher than second placer Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. who received 6,040,973 votes.

Aquilino Pimentel continued to occupy the third spot while Richard Gordon and Jamby Madrigal maintained their hold on the fourth and fifth places.

The Namfrel tally showed the reinstation of votes from Senator Visayas significantly increased the votes of Miriam Defensor-Santiago, enabling her to dislodge Fil. Juliata Gaytano in sixth spot.

Gaytano was back to seventh place; Lito Lapid was eighth; Jinggoy Estrada was ninth and Robert Barbers was still 10th.

The votes from Gaytano and Roxas in favor of Emilio Rosario, Jr. did not affect his 12th standing while Roxas kept the 11th spot.

Cornelio tally

At the official, partial Commission on Elections tally for the senatorial race, Roxas and Revilla remained in occupy the top two posts.

The tally was based on the sixth senatorial canvass report which was encoded at 10:21 a.m. and released yesterday afternoon.

Roxas was able to garner 333,499 votes while Revilla had 317,648.

Pimentel was third with 285,189 votes, followed by Jinggoy Estrada with 264,227 and Ernesto Maceda with 250,000.

The sixth position was taken by Santiago, who was followed by Gordon with 233,782, Legarda with 227,294 and Madrigal with 216,893.

The 10th to the 12th positions were occupied by Gordon with 213,000, Barbers with 204,651 and Barbers with 204,235 votes.

Lapid, Lito Ortmelo, Lapid, Cayetano, Orlando Mercado and Robert Jaworski took the 13th to the 17th positions.

The 18th placer was occupied by Francisco Tatad, followed by Juan Ponce Enrile and Maria Ellen Noon Piot.

POLE VAULT: A Cauayan woodsman jumps from a makeshift stand after posing the latest results on the tally board. —

Tatad slams 'assault' on press freedom

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He warned yesterday that if the Comelec action would be left unchallenged, newspapers and other media would not be able to report the poll body's moves "as they are" and "as they should be."

Asked if the BIR would be usually protect the Comelec action, he replied in the negative, saying that such a move should be taken by the Department ng mga Bisnes[illegible].

Tatad also said the National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections had failed in count poll results from the National Capital Region and had resulted to focus on counting votes cast in the known bailiwicks of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

He said Namfrel area appearently trying to establish a mood, because until more votes cast in the bailiwicks of EDP-mandated Senatorial Pimentel Pan Jr. had been either partially touched or not counted at all.

As of 6 p.m. of May 18, the ABC quick count had Poe's votes at 5,209,090; Ms. Macapagal, 5,197,956; Sen. Panfilo Lacson's, 1,558,613; Sen. Eddie Villanueva, 913,376; and Raul Roco's, 844,661.

Ms. Macapagal is leading Poe by over 1 million votes as the Comelec and Namfrel tallies.

On Monday night, the Comelec en banc stopped ABC from conducting the quick count, saying that it had not been authorized by the poll body to conduct such a count and that it had failed to observe the norms of its data.

Earlier on Monday, acting Justice Secretary Merceditas Gutierrez issued a stern warning against the broadcast or publication of false news or false reports on the election results that, she said, "tends to cast doubt on the credibility and integrity" of last week's polls.

Gutierrez said the Department of Justice had the legal duty to address the false news or information that could endanger public order or cause damage to the interest or credit of the state.

Pattern

In Malacañang, Ms. Macapagal's spokesperson said the opposition and other groups could continue with their private quick counts as long as these would not be used for public circulation.

"There is a pattern of disinformation and underground propaganda that is now being fed into the media, clearly designed to undermine the democratic system," Ignacio Bunye told reporters, echoing the DOJ.

He said Gutierrez's warning was "merely a reiteration of the law" that disallowed the operation of election quick counts—except for that of the duly authorized Namfrel—over a week after had started its official canvass.

He also said that the DOJ had conducted a study on the matter and that it had sound legal basis for issuing the warning.

Bunye, however, could not say whether ABC—owned by billionaire Antonio "Tantoy" Cojuangco—was covered by Gutierrez's warning.

While the gag order on news thwarted quick counts, Malacañang continued to attack on groups and individuals crying fraud in the recent elections.

In a statement, Bunye said: "It is embarrassment that some public commentators seeking to influence events in the electoral process to act as librarian of general fraud, deem politicians cannot sense the misleading, semi-grasping [sic] underpinning our political system."

Temporary suspension

In a statement, ABC News and Public Affairs said it had "temporarily suspended" its election count in compliance with the Comelec's "crisis and desist" Resolution No. 71-09.

"While ABC holds sacrosanct the principle of freedom of speech and our people's right to information, it defers to the Commission's constitutional mandate to regulate election and election-related activities," the network said.

But it said it was "surprised" that the Comelec would issue such a resolution, underscoring that the other TV network "were not similarly admonished." It also said it would not remember the Comelec over having stopped any media group from conducting a count.

"Our election coverage, which we called 'Bilang Bayan,' was premised to be precisely that: a report of the election count, ours and that of other organizations," ABC said, adding:

"We fielded a small army of election correspondents throughout the country to gather election news as and how it broke from its own network personnel. At the same time, we also reported on the counts being conducted by the Comelec, Namfrel, ABS-CBN, GMA-7, ABC, KBC 8-4 as well as the PCIJ (Special Member the

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tional exit poll.

"We were therefore surprised, to say the least, at the Comelec resolution."

ABC said it had built "a reputation for fairness and accuracy" and had "always prided itself as an independent, non-partisan news organization."

"We took on the thankless, tedious and expensive task of mounting our own count because it is not just our prerogative but a duty to report on the results of the elections and to provide a more in-depth analysis of [the same]," it said.

'How can he lose?'

The man who started a nervousness about two years ago to gather at least a million signatures to convince Poe to run for president is nervousness.

"How can (FPJ lose?" said Rudy Carbonnier, who heads the 95-person for Peace, Justice and Progress Movement. "Our people are wondering. They know that FPJ was in every respective precincts. But media reports are saying otherwise."

By Carbonnier's count, his group had gathered two million signatures some their movement was launched in August 2003.

Carbonnier admitted that on Oct. 20, 2003, or four days after he and Poe met for the first time, the movie star appeared at an FPJM gathering at the Cuneta Astrodome in Pasay City. In turn brief remarks, Poe told them that sometime he might be able to respect the wishes.

Then on Nov. 20, 2003, at the Manila Hotel, Poe declared that he was running for the presidency in May 2004.

The same hour seven million card-bearing FPJFM members," Carbonnier said.

He said that like the 2002 their group was conducting its own quick count based on official copies of the certificates of canvass returned by the media.

"The people are angry. Our figures indicate that FPJ is winning by at least one million," Carbonnier said.

He said that on Monday at the Quezon City Sports Club, he told Poe: "Sir, our people know that you won."

"Boots, calm down down," he quoted Poe as saying.

In the question of whether Poe may concede, Carbonnier recalled the actor is saying: "We will all fight to the end." Whitepapers from Christine O. Avanceña, Joel Cabangbang Jr. and Cynthia Pulido

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Ibarra

Bremer vows transfer of power to Iraqis

BAGHDAD—The US governor of Iraq said Tuesday that the transfer of sovereignty to Iraqis must go ahead as scheduled despite the killing of the head of the US-appointed Iraqi Governing Council in a suicide bombing. In a southern city, nine militiamen loyal to a rebel cleric died in fighting with American forces.

"Terrorists are trying to stop Iraq's march to sovereignty and peace," L. Paul Bremer said at a memorial service for Izzedine Salim, who was killed Monday as his car neared at a checkpoint near coalition headquarters.

"They will not succeed. We must continue the political process leading to an interim government next month and to elections next year," said Bremer, whose American-led coalition is struggling to contain an insurgency in Sunni areas north and west of Baghdad, as well as surprising in the Shiite heartland to the south.

Early Tuesday, 21 troops killed nine fighters loyalist to cleric Muqtada al-Sadr in the holy city of Kerbala, said Ghazi al-Ghazi, a veteran who saw their bodies. Six Iraqi fighters were also injured in the clashes, which lasted more than an hour an erupted near the city's Imam Hussein and Imam Abbas shrines.

US troops and militiamen fought in the Mukhaiber district of another holy city, Najaf. Explosions and heavy firing were heard overnight.

Two civilian shells fell Tuesday near a compound formerly used by the Iraqi security service in the Baghdad neighborhood of Saladeyn but there was no word on casualties.

Al-Sadr's militia, al-Mahdi Army launched an uprising against the coalition in early April. Al-Sadr, a fierce opponent of the occupation who is based in Najaf, is wanted on charges of killing a rival moderate cleric last year.

On Monday, the US military said that US soldiers found a roadside bomb containing sarin nerve agent in Baghdad. The device, which partially detonated, was apparently a leftover from Saddam's arsenals. It was unclear whether more such weapons were in the hands of insurgents.

Soldiers who removed the bomb experienced symptoms consistent with low-level nerve agent exposure, US officials said. No one was wounded in the partial blast Saturday, and the dispersal of sarin from the bomb was very limited, the military said.

In Mosul, gunmen opposed the Tuesday on two civilian cars believed to be carrying foreigners, killing two and wounding another, witnesses said. The attack occurred in the center of the northern city.

Insurgents have targeted civilians for

sighters involved in reconstruction in Iraq. In Mosul in March, assailants killed four American contractors who were working on a water project.

At Bremer's memorial for Salim and members the Governing Council gathered inside the so-called Green Zone, which houses the coalition headquarters. Iraqi security forces in dress camouflage escorted Saldoon's coffin, which was draped with the Iraqi flag, from the hall after the service.

Bremer and other dignitaries, including new Governing Council chief Ghazi Mashal Ajil al-Yawer, kissed and shook hands with Saldoon's grieving relatives.

"The enemies of freedom have taken him from his countrymen, from his family and from his friends, and although his loss is greatest for his family and for his country those of us in the coalition shall miss him as well," Bremer said.

US envoy Jaddoo Ibrahim, who is consulting council members and other Iraqis about the makeup of the interim government, said that will take effect after the present handover on June 30, was also at the ceremony.

"We're all working together in order to rebuild Iraq, rebuild her sanctified by life for," Ibrahim said. "We express our candid sorrow to his relatives and to the Iraqi people."

The killing was a major setback to American efforts to stabilize Iraq just six weeks before the handover of sovereignty.

In London, British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw said Sunday that the situation in Iraq is tougher than Britain anticipated last year.

"It's palpable that the difficulties which we have faced have been more extensive than it was reasonable to assume nine months ago," Straw told British Broadcasting Corp. radio.

He said many of the security problems in Iraq had arisen following the attacks on the UN headquarters in Baghdad. The first on Aug. 19 killed 22 people, including top UN envoy Sergio Vieira de Mello. AP

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THE MANAGEMENT
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13 Palestinians killed in Gaza raid

RAFAH, Gaza Strip—Israeli forces killed 13 Palestinians in Gaza's Rafah refugee camp on Tuesday as tanks and infantry swept into the militant stronghold despite international outcry.

The raid, one of the biggest since the start of a Palestinian uprising in 2000, drew international condemnation because of Israel's threats to destroy hundreds of Palestinian houses in the sensitive territory.

But the army said there were no plans for any systematic demolition during what it called an open-ended operation to stop the smuggling of weapons through tunnels from Egypt.

"After the fighting is over, most of the residents will almost certainly return to their homes," said Col. Pinhas Zuaretz, a field commander.

Under cover of darkness, troops loaned out into Rafah's Tel al-Sultan neighborhood, taking strategic points in bullet-pocked buildings as soldiers searched houses in hunt for militants and fought Palestinian gunmen.

Israel had assassinated many Islamic militants in Gaza since capturing it in the 1967 Middle East war, sometimes using air strikes, but it had launched other militants killed. US soldiers there last week and dealt the army its biggest blow for two years.

Palestinian gunships killed seven Palestinians, at least three of them gunmen. The identities of the others were unclear.

Palestinian witnesses said the four, in their 20s and 30s, had gathered for pre-dawn prayers at a mosque set ablaze by the missile strike. Israeli military officials said the missiles hit a band of gunmen.

Six Palestinians, at least one of them a gunman, were killed in street fighting, medics said. About 20 people were wounded in the air attacks and street fighting of "Operation Rainbow."

"We will die and they will die, but we are Muslims and we go to heaven. They will go to the fires of hell," said 30-year-old Palestinian policeman Ashraf al-Jamal.

Palestinians fired rockets and set off hidden bombs in the cities of 80,000 people, a hotbed of militants who attack soldiers patrolling the Egyptian border.

Hundreds of civilians handled moving belongings as donkey-carts, bearing their houses would be destroyed. Some slept in the streets. The army said those buildings were demolished on Sunday.

The planned raid drew US and European Union criticism over fears it could make thousands of Palestinians homeless. Israel's main ally, the United States, also said it was concerned.

"We call upon the whole world to immediately intervene to block Israel's military escalation," said Palestinian cabinet minister Ismail Ashqar.

Abdulaziz has surged in Gaza since Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's pro-peace forces ending troops and Israeli settlers was pleased not be more hostile and the United States, though held up by opposition from ruling party hardliners.

Militants want to claim as a victory any Israeli pullout, while the army is determined to smash militant groups first.

As Tuesday's operation got under way, a Palestinian fighter was killed in an accident preparing a bomb in his house.

"Rafah has become a gateway for terror through rebuilt rocket propelled grenades and other weapons have passed," said army chief Moshe Yaalon. "How are terrorist (unacceptable) to persuade the Palestinian authorities to stop this activity we were forced to pursue this ourselves."

TRIBAL ASSEMBLY

Pakistani tribesmen hold their weapons as they gather for a traditional jirga (tribal assembly) in Wana, the main town of Pakistan's South Waziristan tribal region, near the Afghan border. Pakistani tribes agreed to register foreigners living in their region but denied any foreign militants were present in the area at all. AP

Annan wants Suu Kyi released

UNITED NATIONS—Secretary-General Kofi Annan urged southeast Asian nations to pressure Burma (also called Myanmar) to keep its promise to the United Nations and release pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi so she can participate in the reconciliation process now under way.

Annan said Monday that he used his special envoy Ibrahi Gambari, "who delivered that despite receiving assurances from the government," the military-ruled government did not release Suu Kyi from detention and lift the remaining restrictions on her National League for Democracy.

The United Nations thought it had an agreement on Suu Kyi, her party and other opposition parties to take part in the reconvened convention to write a constitution.

But the military junta formally called the State Peace and Development Council and known by its acronym SPDC—reorganized the constitutional convention recently despite an opposition boycott and massive international criticism, and immediately declared it a successful first step to democracy.

"The secretary-general reiterates that, for the National Convention to be credible, it must be all-inclusive and that all the delegates must be able to express their views without restriction," UN spokesperson Fred Eckhard said in a statement.

He noted that the political parties that won the majority of seats in the 1990 elections did not participate in Monday's meeting. Burma's military seized power in 1988 after crushing a pro-democracy uprising and held elections in 1990, but refused to recognize the results after Suu Kyi's party won.

"The release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who has clearly indicated her willingness to work with the government, and U Tin Oo, Deputy Chairman of the NLD, as well as the lifting of the remaining restrictions on the NLD, are essential if the international community is to recognize the National Convention as a legitimate forum for democratization and national reconciliation in Myanmar," the UN statement said. AP

AFTER SEPT. 11

New York remains a high-risk terror target

NEW YORK— New York City remains a top terror target, but still lacks the funds to equip and train rescue officials more than 2-1/2 years after Sept. 11, the commission investigating the attacks will hear on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Meeting less than 3 km from the former site of the World Trade Center, the panel will hear grim testimony from police and fire officials and review dramatic footage and audio tapes of the deadly day in 2001 in hopes of figuring out what went wrong and what can be done to prevent future attacks.

Among the nearly 3,000 people killed in the suicide airplane attacks on New York and Washington were around 343 firefighters and 23 police officers.

"The city of New York remains a high risk target," said Frank Cebbon, deputy commissioner for public information at the New York City fire department. "We clearly have needs that exceed the allocations we've received."

Rep. Carolyn Maloney, a Democrat whose constituency includes parts of Manhattan, said the city still had "serious gaps in the equipment and training necessary to best prevent and respond to future terrorist attacks."

A senior New York City police official said the police department was spending at least $200 million a year in overtime payments alone as it seeks to provide round-the-clock protection against potential attackers.

"We want to tell the commission that our job is to make certain another attack on New York is not inevitable, that we're in a position to thwart it and that we need federal operational support to do it, and by that I mean money," the official said.

Coordination among "first responders" in the police, fire and other departments will come under close scrutiny during the hearings. Media reports and some officials say coordination and communications equipment are still not good enough to ensure rescuers can stay in touch if disaster strikes.

Memories of the attacks are still fresh on the United States and especially in New York, where a huge construction site now marks the spot where two of the world's tallest buildings crashed into smoldering heaps of metal and glass.

"We want to know what mistakes were made and how to improve on those in the future," said Commissioner Timothy Roemer. He said he expected one of the "most gut wrenching and heart pounding hearings" to date.

"What I hope to learn and expect the hearings to produce is what have we done since (the attacks) ? Are we ready for the next emergency?" he said.

In addition to current and former heads of the New York police, fire and emergency management departments, the commission will hear testimony from Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge, Mayor Michael Bloomberg and former Mayor Rudolph Giuliani.

The National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States has held 118 public hearings so far and grilled a broad range of officials, including President George W. Bush, to find out why the United States failed to prevent Sept. 11 and what steps are needed to provide better security now.

The commission is working to complete its final report by July 26. Reuters

THE WORLD Twin Center (before Sept 11, 2001).

Iraqis believe Saddam is guilty

WASHINGTON — Most in the Iraqis believe Saddam Hussein was guilty of murdering and torturing civilians in their country, according to a recent nationwide poll in Iraq.

The Gallup Poll of Iraq found that Iraqis have grown increasingly impatient with British and American troops in their country, but they have no nostalgia for the rule of Saddam.

"As much as they are looking forward rather than backward, Iraqis still want justice for past crimes," said Richard Wuthnow, director of international polling for Gallup.

When asked whether they thought Saddam was guilty of murdering Iraqis, 84 percent said yes when asked whether they thought he tortured Iraqis, 83 percent said yes.

US authorities will eventually turn Saddam over to Iraqi governors to face trial.

The United States estimates that Saddam's regime killed at least 300,000 Iraqis, some human rights groups say the number is closer to 1 million.

If an Iraqi tribunal finds Saddam guilty of murdering Iraqis, 61 percent of Iraqis say he should get the death penalty. One in five say he should have a life sentence.

Three-quarters of all Iraqis have a very unfavorable view of Saddam. A more sympathetic view of Saddam comes mostly from the heavily Sunni areas of the country. In those areas, almost half, 46 percent, say they have a favorable view of Saddam, more than the number who see him unfavorably.

Gallup released the first results of the Iraq poll two weeks ago. It released the findings about Saddam in the Gallup Tuesday Briefing, a subscription service run by the polling firm.

The poll of 3,444 Iraqi adults was conducted by the Iraq Arab Research Center of Dubai in late March and early April and had a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 2 percentage points. AP

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OPINION

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Sobriety

EDITORIAL

Sobriety, yet spiritual, was Raul Roco's concession of defeat. He is the first presidential candidate to face up to reality and retire with dignity.

It is the inner characteristic that is remarkable for its rarity. Often, the admission of defeat in our country is marked with bitterness and recrimination. Or, it is marred by sycophancy. In contrast, Roco was gracious without being craven, firm without being insulting, democratic without ever resorting to disappointing his partisans. He remained true to himself, which is the best that can be said of any public man.

Roco, in recognizing his country denied him a mandate for the presidency, was correctly recognizing reality—without, as he pointed out, conceding that proper investigation may reveal electoral corruption. In the face of any cheating, revealing it and punishing it become a national, not just partisan, issue. After all, cheating of any kind, by any camp, is an attempt to thwart the popular will, and a subversion of the democratic process to which everyone has a stake.

In Roco's own words, "for now, a sober effort to get the country going should be the agenda of every Filipino." This is particularly the case when it comes to the three candidates whose defeat can already be seen to be certain. The current issues concerning the counting of votes cannot fundamentally affect the reality of Roco's, Lacson's and Villanueva's campaigns. Attempts to document cheating will only mostly wrongs but not stave off defeat. This Roco knows and this is what the other two defeated losers must realize. And realize soon.

Sen. Rodolfo Lacson, for one, denied even of Roco, spoke in unreasonable terms after the voting. In recent days he has backpedaled somewhat, perhaps out of pique over his uneven standings being considered selling out. Sen. Eddie Villanueva, on the other hand, began with incendiary rhetoric but has begun to be more subdued. He has gone as far as to recognize he has not won, without conceding to anyone else as the winner. Both candidates, who proclaim idealism as the preeminent virtue of their campaigns, should now look to the example of Roco.

My neighbor pronouns not could use the temporary shroud of dignity or legal right, in the name of political unity. One does not betray one's self, or one's followers, by ignoring false praise. Behavior of this sort only fosters the suspicion it is hypocrisy in aid of honest gain. But we remind these candidates that the verdict is clear, whatever the large verdict may be; and that they must now exchange their responsibility to their partisans and reassure responsibility to the whole.

The country must know there now can face defeat, and march from it not just still respect, or dignity, but a continued issue on life for themselves. A new issue on life as responsible, nation-building leaders of men and women. The country must know they are in it not just for the personal fight but for the long haul. This requires lowering their prestige and audacity in the system, and not just in their ambitions, now clearly frustrated.

In track, in congratulating President Macapagal-Arroyo ahead of a formal proclamation by Congress, Roco went further than he had to. His other rivals needn't go as far. They need only to say what everyone, including their supporters, know: The fight was good, but victory has gone to somebody else.

What happened?

FOREIGN COMMENT

A LONG WITCH HUNT accusations that troops from the Queen's Lancashire Regiment tortured Iraqi prisoners, it is alleged that soldiers from the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers were involved in sexual assault, that British observers were present at Abu Ghraib prison while Americans were mistreating inmates, that our forces were implicated in the shooting of Iraqi demonstrators and civilians, and that details of at least some cases of abuse were presented by the Red Cross in February.

It is important to emphasize that nothing has been proved against our servicemen.

That said, it is vital that we get to the bottom of what happened.

The army is, of course, a human institution, and prone to human failings. If soldiers have abused their positions, they should be given exemplary and expeditious punishment; and let us hear no nonsense about young boys far from home having difficult circumstances.

Our reputation as a country depends on our unquestioned ethical. If our servicemen have been seriously blackguarded, they will be entitled to a handsome apology from several newspapers. But if they are guilty, they are a disgrace to Britain.

The Daily Telegraph (London)

Count shows SWS exit poll was wrong

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

IT turns out the exit poll of the Social Weather Stations which predicted a 7 percent win for President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo over Fernando Poe Jr. in Metro Manila is wrong. The owners of some shows that 193 went in all but one of the 33 cities and municipalities of Metro Manila, said Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. who was the guest speaker Monday's Kapihan sa Manila.

"Sec. only did GMA not lose a 7 percent lead over FPJ," Pimentel said, "she had to lose in Metro Manila. So that proves the exit poll was wrong. Yet its results were given credit publicity by media, and especially by the public. But when counter-exit polls come out, there was no publicity of equal prominence.

Probably what was wrong with the exit poll is that it was not really an exit poll. As the interviewers went to each poll to get the figures as they exit the polling places. They are asked whom they voted for before they leave, the results are added up and the polling from comes up with an extrapolation of what the results of the voting would be. But this DWD did not do it that way. The field workers went to the homes of voters and popped the question.

The trouble is that this is the first election here where the voters are educated and afraid to say truthfully whom they voted for president. A voter who voted for FPJ is ashamed to say so because that identifies him with the loser class, or, perhaps an ignoramus. If he is a government employee, he is afraid he might be dismissed, demoted or at least harassed. The reliable but did not vote for DBS, explained Pimentel. And especially his identity and address are now known to the pollster who is on his home. So he claims he voted for GMA even if he did not. Which is why the exit poll was inaccurate, he said.

And if that exit poll is wrong, so are other polls, said the senator.

One mystery is why GMA and Neb de Castro are winning in the Stanford and Comelec counts by leaps and bounds, while the SWS, the BSP count shows that FPJ has already won, Pimentel pointed out.

But of course the SWS count is biased. If its own count shows that FPJ is losing, he might as well concede. Still, is there basis for that count that shows FPJ winning? Is it possible that the Stanford quick count is inaccurate? Could it be that the opposition has been contaminated by the administration? But how can that be when the opposition already appointed observing and supposedly took elaborate measures to counter it? If the cheating was really widespread and massive, why is the BSP having a difficult time gathering evidence?

But look at the circumstantial evidence, says the opposition. The early quick counts that showed GMA leading were made by ABS-CBN and GMA-DBS, and only later by Stanford. Who owns ABS? Its multimillionaire opponent of GMA. Who owns ABS-CBN? The Lopezes who support GMA and whose star employee, Jo Cuerva, is her vice presidential candidate.

And why did the Stanford quick count suddenly become a "slow count"? Stanford's only reason for being is to count the votes fast. Why did it falter and allow ABS and ABS-CBN to beat it to the quick count? And why did Stanford subsequently oppose the Comelec's own quick count and its modernization?

And speaking of solid evidence, Pimentel showed evidence of cheating in Bacolor, Pampanga. Cebu's home province, where 5,327 votes were allegedly disfavored from his votes. He said he actually got 6,000 votes in Bacolor but the certificate of canvass was altered to make it appear that he got only 673 votes, increasing the votes of Roco and Lacson. He also filing charges against the members of the Bacolor municipal board of canvassers.

Pimentel added that in Bacolor, per the COC, GMA got 24,307 votes while FPJ got only 1,189 votes, and that he and Sandy Madrigal were the only KNP candidates who landed in the canvass results.

He said that in San Simon, also in Pampanga, 25,000 votes tallied for him were inclined credited to an administration senatorial candidate, a classic display brazen operation.

* * *

Pimentel also repeated his accusation that Comelec Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano was wrong in the company of Pagcor Chair Ephraim Genuino at the Diamond Hotel in Manila on the night of May 10. He said he got a tip about their presence there so he went two there to spy on them, and they gave him a detailed report, complete with descriptions of their clothes, time, place, etc.

The Feast Room in the Edsa-Shangri-la section of the hotel, he said. "At about 9-11 p.m., Garcillano went out of the function room followed by two security people in T-shirts with arched looked like Comelec IDs.

"One of the security men carried a paper bag, 18" x 12" in size, that looked full and was stapled at its opening. Garcillano was in a tight green batik jacket and Genuino was in a flesh-colored barong."

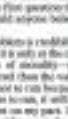
Pimentel said that he knows what was in the bag. Garcillano said it was a stuffed toy. Ebers Gahara or Diamond Hotel will testify that it was not. Pimentel said it was "too appropriate for Garcillano to be seen with Genuino under the circumstances where Pagcor stands accused of funding the President's election bid."

"Even questionable is the report that Genuino was booked in Room 1820 which was reportedly arranged by businessman "Willy King," Pimentel continued. "King was seen in the hotel in a blue striped, short-sleeved camakasi shirt. Also seen at the hotel that night was IOD Commissioner Al Fernandez who was in a long-sleeved blue shirt."

Garcillano and Genuino admitted they were in the hotel that night but denied that the two of them met. They gave three different reasons.

Pyrrhic victory

THERE'S THE RUB



Conrado de Quiros

I AM glad "Troy" is showing today, even if, on the outside (rightly) say, it is a very pale replica of Homer's heroic masterpiece "The Iliad." It resonates with all in any but some of its sense of honor. But if it can interest the youth in poetry because of having the movie, or indeed read (alas, a dying art), it will have done its job. It's from this "Iliad" you'll best learn the concept of Pyrrhic victory, a victory so much so great cost you wonder what it's worth. It's the other word for hollow victory. That was what the cashing of Troy, in Homer, was, accomplished in the end through the Trojan horse. It was a ruse that in the end really had no virtues.

But I'll say no more and leave the readers to discover "The Iliad's" wonders for themselves.

That, is what Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is suppending victory to the electorate in a Pyrrhic one. It has been won at such a great cost, you wonder what it is worth. One is tempted to say we're not gone back to square one, in the point we left late last year when everybody was asking, "What is happening to the country?" But that is not entirely true. We are not back to square one, we've vaulted further back.

GMA won—at least in the counting, if not in the voting. If her opponents are to be believed—by a simple ruse, which was by making Fernando Poe Jr. and not herself the issue in the election. The election was a referendum in the mind of GMA's handlers, as I said, that they never saw through it. They kept PEI out of view from the belief he had more to lose from being seen (and heard) than from not being so. His disappearance merely fueled the fear of him that the GMA camp was already sowing. It transferred the referendum of the incumbent being the issue, which is the normal course of elections, the hypothetical axis of a challenger between us.

It was the fear of PEI that Gloria manipulated to get to GMA, believing her to be the lesser evil. But with PEI erased from the picture once GMA is declared winner, the focus of national attention goes back on GMA. The question that screams with a vengeance is: How really lost of an evil is she?

In these times of uncertainty and apathy, what you need is assurance and uplift. Nothing would help more than that a government wanting to put an end to corruption—of the body and soul that it precisely where the problem lies.

If GMA has won this election, it is only at the cost of ransacking the public treasury to campaign. However you slice it, that is corruption. That is the use of public funds for private ends. Something the Church, business community, the courts, the media and the public could have dearly been willing to tolerate. Excuse that because I got a lot of hate mail from people asking me why I kept harping on that issue. My reason is simple. If you cannot stop corruption during the elections, how can you hope to stop it after the elections? How can you expect someone whom you just allowed to use public funds to campaign...and even rewarded with a fresh mandate—to stop using public funds to resist?

How can honesty and integrity possibly qualify as pillars of unity?

And last but not least, there is the cannot being ignored by a convincing of votes that has been less than normal and transparent. I heard the reasons but Monday that put the burden of proof on government and not the opposition to show that the elections were clean. I don't know that the losing candidates will be able to show proof of massive fraud. But the combination of GMA's incumbent uses of power and the less-than-subtle ministrations of the Comelec, Stanford and SWS must convince to raise issues about the integrity of the election for a long time. It will certainly not make it easy for the losing candidates to flock eagerly, or even resignedly, to GMA's side amid her calls for putting the elections behind us. As far only Bertha Lacson has done so, which has earned her the ire of the supporters of hearing down the "Iron Lacson" in the aftermath of doing. Some truly has much evidence today.

Some defeats, like I said yesterday, are sublime victories. Some victories are merely Pyrrhic.

Roco's statesmanship

ANALYSIS

Armando Doronila

RAUL Roco rose from the ashes of his political annihilation by succeeding, against odds. Although his nomination was qualified, he emerged with a demonstrable aura, not allowing himself to be shunted to the sidelines as an ornamental figure in Gloria Arroyo's political campaign. With this gesture, Roco not only emerged standing rather than the other presidential candidates' aides, he left open his political future for further service to the country. If he is now perceived his campaign, that setback was temporary. His statesmanlike flexibility accepts the necessity of the unofficial status.

Roco conceded in the midst of allegations of election cheating. His concession does not resolve the issue of cheating. The counting process—either by the unofficial "manual" quick count or by the official count—is dubious and questionable. Having parties alleging "massive fraud" more makes sense to back their allegations. Avenues to challenge the outcome have been closed.

Roco's world "massive fraud" elevates the term. Based on accounts of other observers being alleged by hosts and presented to public forums, it appears that the allegations concern irregularities mainly at the local level and not in the scale that would affect the outcome of the May 10 national presidential, vice-presidential and senatorial elections. Opposition charges, aired by mass media, damage the credibility of emerging administration. For these, it appears that hired hits committed by the Ampatuans of Maguindanao, the Singsons of Ilocos and the Garcias of Cebu. Further, it appears that hired hits committed by the Ampatuans of Maguindanao, the Singsons of Ilocos and the Garcias of Cebu.

The Roco campaign's decision to go for independent votes in the process, hoping that electoral irregularities would not affect their allegations. The hubris have entailed that partisan counters have tried to turn them to the benefit of their candidates, thus creating doubt that the "manual" counts could ensure and destroy the credibility of their elections. Fortunately, the bishops are through these schemes and have advised complainants to go through the established process and prove their case with hard evidence. Secular politicians have avoided being drawn into making judgments on massive fraud even before the process has not been completed. They have been even handed in refusing to be drawn into partisan conversations.

The Roco is not the election are two marching clues those of the 1969 stop elections stolen by former President Ferdinand Marcos. Their scale cannot ignite a people power mobilization. In 1969, Hundred Grand Rally comes, with 1M persons of the opposition candidates, shouted opposition Sen. Gerardo Angeles scrapping Marcos under a deluge of votes. After the Comelec took over, under Marcos henchman Leonardo Perez, in to unconstitutionally reversed victims of Kamboa's. The multitude of Comelec computer technicians repeated Marcos' margin to change the results.

On this occasion, Batasan's abolition shows that with the arrival of more media, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Noli de Castro and the 6-4 senatorial tickets keep on piling their lead. This is exactly the opposite of the 1969 count.

The allegations against Batasan for "stealing" in favor of the administration or charges of "Batasan" fraud are not enough to hold another people power upheaval. The issues need more explosive legislations to unleash another folks. Those pinoy soap scenarios are indulging in diarrhetoric. Many Arroyo Boys thought he would face extreme people power by declaring a proclaim a day after the election an indefinite change of election clearing. His effort was partiale. Hardly a thousand of paid hacks went to the streets. Seven failed coup attempts in the last three years have none chance of success. The people are exhausted from this election exercise, and are disposed instead waiting for the completion of the counts. They want an end to the people power syndrome. They who are feeling nauseated by provoking trouble more than they can handle. Disgruntled losers cannot benefit from coups. Coup makers, if they succeed in it, will seize power for themselves. They will not hand over power to Panday, Roco or Estrada. Whatever. The windfall even give them the consolation of having once in a lifetime.

Ah, marriage

THE FEED of Massachusetts has joined Belgium, the Netherlands and Ontario, Canada in legalizing same-sex marriages. The reactions have been predictable: politicians from whom one got must as well as civil liberties one, outrage from conservatives, who rage and wail that such marriages violate "natural law" and that societies will fall apart with such perversions.

Contradictory

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

speak about marriage as if it were some monolithic institution, involving one man and one woman pledging their lives to each other, having children in order to multiply and fill the earth. But marriage as it is now is not and never has been monolithic in structure

An affirmation of democracy

LAST May 10, millions of Filipino voters stooped in the polls, confident of the means by which we conduct our democracy and hopeful that the collective wisdom of our voters will see the nation through to a better future.

There was some misery that some significant irregularities might occur in our cumbersome process of elections, considering the last few administrations that had to be stuck with the shift from computerized to manual elections. By the close of the polls, however, there was a general sense that despite some confusion and disorder that accompanied the process, the elections were fairly conducted. The solemn work of millions of election workers, especially the students, patriotism and volunteer teachers, must be credited for yet another exhausting yet redeeming exercise of electoral democracy.

To be sure, the electoral process is far from over. All the more can must be properly counted and canvassed in different levels. Certificates of canvass must be safeguarded at every step. As the canvassing and call on Filipinos everywhere to rig flawlessly apply their energies to ensuring the swift completion of a credible count. Finally, when the process is completed and the winners are proclaimed, we appeal to all in behalf of our nation: set aside partisan interests and unite to support of the sovereign will of the electorate.

We are confident that our democratic muscle fiber and the democratic process will triumph. We look forward to a period of peace and prosperity for our people.

Let us join hands in prayer and in gratitude for yet another triumph of democracy in unison and in anticipation of a more beautiful future for the nation.

—VICTORIAS CASTILLO-BAUTISTA, president
Alliss People Power Confederation, Inc.
Ivy Iguerta T. Bilig, Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City

The true Filipino dilemma

RIZAL, the unifying force of the country, which did not really embody a creative working system and only condensed the minds of those who believed in it, a systematized debate about the true Filipino dilemma, as suggested by Leonardo Quirino, would have been a noteworthy event that our presidential hopefuls should have taken seriously.

The true Filipino dilemma at this point is whether or not exclusive discussion, Filipinos remain bereft of viable working more options other than that of "cherishing the noble bowls of the world," as Sir Quirino put it. (PDI, 5/12/04).

Nobody among the presidential contenders even confronted the issues of Filipino migrants. Not even the media. This, because labor migration has rarely if at all, bureaucracy and economist enough as a topic, not until an overseas Filipino worker (OFW) is killed, or there is an impending mass deportation, or one of them loses his job (OFWs to mind in most dailies).

The case of Elmer Aquino, the young man from Bataan who topped the medical board exams but accepted a job as a caregiver in New York, is something that should be taken seriously. Why do our schools be to retrain professionals opt to be second-class workers in a foreign land?

Aquino's case describes only one the failures of the government to think of ways in generating decent and sustainable jobs locally. We expected an answer on remittances that labor export is treated as a yearly project of the government. Unless, it is not surprising to see millions of Filipinos considering overseas work as a permanent order than a temporary one.

Be the social cause of migration can weigh the benefits from drain, depleting the human quality of families, increasing number of children with absentee parents and harsh experiences of OFWs and their families. Unless these issues are elevated to a political discourse, Filipinos will continue to sacrifice themselves as cheap economic commodities.

—MARIA RUTH COLOM,
Alliance of Filipino Workers and Advocates on Annual Income Tax (AFAT)
c/o theNEWSPAPER.com

Afterglow of 'The Passion'

COUNTLESS international reviews and articles were written about the "gross epic film" of Mel Gibson, who was reported to be on the verge of committing suicide before its making. His brilliant creation crushed many minds and made in a greater magnitude than any other film made on the entire theme. The movie could make a hard core score level.

I would have missed the movie, if not for the long distance ponderings of a daughter. I share each films. Even in playing the theory. I exist the sacrificial sequences.

While watching the movie, I couldn't help crying. But I let the tears roll down my face. Ordinarily, I would have wiped them or took a cry-baby. As the finale, as the picturesque scene of the "Pieta" showing the limply twisted, broken body of a precious Son, so disfigured, so unrecognized by a mankind sick, troubled in the arms of His mother, I held back myself from anything. In the toilet cubicle, I let me to sob.

I now understand the verse, "Through Jesus' stripes and sufferings, I am healed," and why it is an effective stanza for the sick.

After Christ's resurrection, the apostles suffered a similar fate: Paul was stoned and beheaded, John was boiled in a basin of oil, Peter was crucified upside down, Matthew was stoned and beheaded, Jude was killed with arrows and Bartholomew was flayed to death by whipping.

Our country, with corruption fast becoming a culture, has all kinds of darkness and chasms, resulting in hopelessness, unemployment, proliferation of addicts, rapists, killers, outlaws, beggars, rogues, DPM vandals, etc.

Grass-root Antiseo don't care trampling on other's good name which is man's first and timeless wealth. Shakespeare said: "He who steals my purse steals trash; 'tis something, nothing. 'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands. But he that filches from me my good name robs me of that which not enriches him and makes me poor indeed." Recently, every hearing Christ received reminds me of harsh lies. Lies have wrecked around the world too much for its abuse. I once chided God that he suffered only for some hours while the vengeful lashed in mind. I was wrong then, for 2,000 years after his crucifixion, Christ is still being vengeance-lashed on end. To the aggrieved, those healing verses come to the fore:

In man's affliction, God is affluent.—Is 63:9

The wicked shall be a ransom for the righteous.—Pr 21:18

In my flesh, I am filling up what is lacking in the affliction of Christ.—Col. 1:24

I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them as refuse, that I may win Christ.—Phil. 3:8.

—FERDINAND PARAS,
1355 Lopez Antolin St., Cavite City 4100

A strong federal republic with GMA's blessing

IN A FRONT PAGE item by John Lohag, Jaurillana, the Inquirer (PDI, 5/5/04) reported that President Macapagal-Arroyo agreed to serve as "transition President" until 2007.

About mid-March, President Macapagal was reported in the media as having advanced to an immediate constitutional change if elected in the May 10 elections.

On May 11, the Inquirer reported that Mr Macapagal has agreed in a talk with Hilhadak leader Mike Velarde that a constitutional change must be done "immediately after the May elections" (Mr Macapagal looks in "moment of glory" talks of removing the Constitution). It did, according to the report, "a constitutional convention is more viable."

With these reports, I believe that she will push for the transformation of our political system into a parliamentary form with an election by 2007, so say the ground for the formation of a strong federal republic. She may opt to step down after three years of her presidency to run for a parliamentary seat and be the first prime minister of the new federal Republic of the Philippines.

Hopefully, the people, especially the politicians, the military, the civil society, will see the reality that the President is looking at and give her unqualified support to show the national unity and patriotism for the good and well-being of the nation. Her detractors all to help to fulfill her thoughts for a fundamental transformation to a better political system and, hopefully, restore also the values of our people centered religious, morality and spirituality.

—FERDINAND A. ASIS,
Contact number(s) unknown

Across the NATION
Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

Comelec fires police chief of Isabela

By Sillarian Visaya Jr.
INQ7.net Northern Luzon Bureau

ILAGAN, Isabela—The Commission on Elections has relieved the Isabela police director to defuse the growing tension between the supporters of reelectionist Gov. Faustino Dy Jr. and leading gubernatorial candidate Ms. Grace Uy-de Bulaco.

Chief Supt. Jefferson Soriano, Cagayan Valley police director, said the temporary relief of Senior Supt. Delsan Mario was made on the request of Catholic Bishop Sergio Utleg to Comelec Commissioner Mehol Sadain, commissioner in charge for Cagayan Valley.

Utleg wanted to transfer Mario "to instill fairness in the police's operations" in the province.

Soriano, however, said Mario's relief order on May 17 coincided with the official's approved application for a 30-day leave, which was filed on May 13.

"This is just like shooting two birds with the same stone. It happened that the Comelec wanted him to be relieved temporarily" Soriano said.

The Comelec has the sole authority to transfer police and Army officials during the election period after the commission put the province under its control following the political tension.

Senior Supt. Napoleon Estilles, the regional police intelligence and investigation chief, was named acting Isabela police director on Tuesday.

Soriano said he has sent additional forces from the regional police mobile group to beef up at least 110 Army soldiers sent to the provincial capitol here.

About 1,000 supporters of Dy and Padaca have been camping out at the provincial capitol grounds to await the final results of the provincial canvassing.

The provincial canvassing was indefinitely suspended on Tuesday after lawyer Bey Dones, acting provincial election supervisor, and schools division superintendent Romeo Tumamao, secretary of the provincial canvassing board, resigned for vacation reasons.

The Comelec's partial and official canvassed returns from 34 districts 27 towns and a city on Sunday also showed that Padaca, with 330,486 votes, was leading Dy, who got 147,509 votes.

The official Comelec canvass of election returns in at least seven Isabela towns has yet to be completed. Unofficial and complete results of the National Citizens Movement for Free Elections' (namfrel) count showed Padaca winning in the gubernatorial race against Dy.

In the Namfrel count covering Isabela's 15 towns and a city, Dy received 296,809 votes while Padaca got 316,727 votes or a margin of 42,756 votes.

However, both camps of Padaca and Dy are claiming victory in the May 10 elections.

Edwin Segui, Comelec regional director, ordered an indefinite recess in the canvassing while awaiting for a new chief of the canvassing board.

NEW ROLE
A classroom at the Kapitan Tomas Mundaraw de Elementary School in Ozamiz City is prepared for the opening of classes next month.

Muslims flee Sultan Kudarat, fear bloodbath

ISULAN/MANILA (AFP)—The rising tension brought by the post-election bloodbath in Columbio, Sultan Kudarat, is slowly devastating more than 10 Muslim residents of the town. Fear has now turned into heavy heaved supporters of rival candidates.

When the shootout in the town that resulted in the death of four supporters of mayoral candidate Mohaimin Paglas last week, two) started to pack up important things and left for Datu Paglas town and entire Columbio villages of Mora, Lomoyon and Manilibon," Esiquio Sultjal, a resident, said.

Sultjal and residents went to town their lives.

In an elementary school in Datu Paglas town alone, Sultjal, a former youth leader, said they listed at least 400 refugees.

"The children are starting to get sick with fever, cold, cough and diarrhea. We need assistance here," he said adding that the assistance they received from the local government could not meet the need.

Columbio police chief Insp. Nasheen Ibrian said only Muslims fled the town.

Ibrian said Muslim natives and Christians remained in their villages.

On Sunday, four of Paglas's supporters were killed when shots were fired during the transfer of ballot boxes from Columbio to Isulan town.

The transfer was ordered by the Commission on Elections to prevent violence between the supporters of Paglas and the followers of his rival, incumbent Mayor Edwin Fernandez.

But instead of allowing the transport of the ballot boxes, Fernandez's supporters staged a blockade and prevented the military from escorting out the election paraphernalia.

Ibrian said the military and police are working together to identify who fired the shots.

Sultjal said they would stay in the evacuation centers unless the government resolves the problem.

Col. Rolando Pino, commander of the Army's 60th infantry Battalion said the situation was already becoming normal.

But he said violence continues in four villages.

Pino said the military would work hard to prevent further bloodshed and that they would return to the area until the problem had been resolved.

—AP, Pia M. Dejoya, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Mt. Province politicians perform ritual to remove bad luck after elections

By Desiree Caluza
INQ7.net Northern Luzon Bureau

BONTOC, Mt. Province—It was 5 a.m. on May 13 when Emma Asuncion started to accept customers who were looking for her native chicken in her livestock store at the former market.

It was also on that day that many residents in the towns of Besao and Sagada started receiving the majority of native pigs, locally known as ulango, and had to travel to Bontoc to buy one for their friends.

May 13 was the day when the provincial Commission on Elections proclaimed the winning candidates in the local elections and officials, Asuncio discovers as demand because the politicians had to perform the chase-a, a ritual to cleanse themselves of the curse and bad luck that they received during the election period.

Contributing Mr. Pasawan (or, Muslim Dalog said the butchering of pigs and chickens was a form of taliqui (Ambagnag), and also a way to call on the spirits to protect and guide the winning candidates in his district.

Dalog said the life of the slaughtered pig, which will be used by elders and the native priest (mambunong), will guide these subscribers to handle a rock or a bolo.

"If the life does not look good, the elders will ask that we butcher a cock to fight and drive away the negative forces. But if it looks good, they will ask us to butcher a hen, as it will nurture and protect the person (who is the subject of the ritual)," Dalog told the inquirer.

Other elders prefer carabaos and cows for the ritual. In the old days, the elders performed the chase-a to pray for the tribe's warriors who would go to war. Now, the elders say the ritual is to protect the people of their tribe who are going to another form of battle, like modern politics.

Dalog said some elders prefer dogs for the chase-a.

"As the elders say, election is like combat, where candidates come and some even pay for their opponents to die or lose, and because dogs bark, it would drive away the bad luck that was attached upon the person during the campaign," Dalog said.

"The ritual actually is symbolizing. Whatever bad things that was prayed for by the opponent would just evaporate, but it does not mean that you would have to pray for your opponent's to suffer," he said.

Dalog said the elected politicians, who is perceived to be the central character in the ritual, is not allowed to eat with the community when the meat is served.

Mr. Pasawan (or, Muslim Dalog said the butchering of pigs and chickens was a form of taliqui (Ambagnag), and also a way to call on the spirits to protect and guide the winning candidates in his district.

Dalog said the life of the slaughtered pig, which will be used by elders and the native priest (mambunong), will guide these subscribers to handle a rock or a bolo.

"If the life does not look good, the elders will ask that we butcher a cock to fight and drive away the negative forces. But if it looks good, they will ask us to butcher a hen, as it will nurture and protect the person (who is the subject of the ritual)," Dalog told the inquirer.

Other elders prefer carabaos and cows for the ritual. In the old days, the elders performed the chase-a to pray for the tribe's warriors who would go to war. Now, the elders say the ritual is to protect the people of their tribe who are going to another form of battle, like modern politics.

Dalog said some elders prefer dogs for the chase-a.

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Militant group calls for resignation of 4 administration officials

LUCENA CITY—A left-leaning party-list group has sought the resignation of two Malacañang executives and top military and police officials over charges of alleged partisan politics in the May 10 elections.

Rafael Mariano, Anakpawis national president, identified the officials as Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita, Armed Forces Chief of Staff Narciso Abaya, National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales and Philippine National Police Chief Hermogenes Ebdane Jr.

Mariano said in a statement that Ermita, Abaya, Gonzales and Ebdane's partisan politicking in the last elections against the party-list bid of Bayan Muna, Anakpawis, Gabriela, Anak-ng Bayan, Migrante and Sanlakas Bayan Muna violated the law on party-list system, the Fair Elections Act and the 1987 Constitution.

Restiveness

Meanwhile, spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal, yesterday warned in a phone interview that the widespread restiveness spurred by massive electoral fraud and violence during last week's national elections may lead to startling street protests in the months weeks.

Rosal charged that the military and reactionary candidates and parties, "especially those in power, dictated the vote in many areas through terrorism and vote-buying, and launched schemes to manipulate election results including massive 'cross' disenfranchisement, vote-padding, over-shooting as well as outright counting methods."

He said: "Same methods of electoral fraud and violence while mainly directed against major opposition candidates are now increasingly being applied against the progressive party-list organizations."

"In fact, in the recently held polls, it was the progressives who suffered the most in terms of election-related killings and harassment," Rosal said.

Charges

Mariano said their lawyers are also studying the possibility of filing criminal and administrative charges against the four officials before the courts including charges of massive cheating and election-related state violence against the six leftist party-list groups.

Last week, Pedro Gonzales, Anakpawis Quezon chair and Pamalakaya national vice-chair, surrendered on multiple sty in Cainuan, Quezon.

The leftist group pointed to the military as responsible to the arrest today.

It also pointed to the military as the culprit behind the murders of Adrian Alegria, Edwin Marcaida and Jovlan "Jun" Manano, all Anakpawis coordinators in Mindoro island, during the heat of the campaign period.

"The military laptops would not set on their own without direct orders from highertup," Mariano said in justifying Anakpawis' plan to charge the four administration officials before the senate.

He added: "The AFP mobilized its troops and personnel to operate 'display boxes' against the six progressive party-lists to the extent of taking over Comelec functions and duties in the ballotbox and strongholds of Bayan Muna, Anakpawis and allied party-lists."

Prior to the May 10 elections, Mariano said the military had engaged in massive black propaganda against the six progressive groups named by Gonzales as legal fronts of the Communist Party of the Philippines and its armed wing, the New People's Army.

Vote-buying

Anakpawis said its poll watchers had discovered a systematic pattern of massive vote-buying, also known as 'display boxes,' in several towns of Batangas and nearby provinces like Laguna, Rizal, Cebu, Bohol other provinces in Western and Eastern Visayas and Mindanao.

To prevent the alleged election fraud, the militant group will stage protest actions in 50 provinces and 15 regions to denounce the "state-sponsored and Malacañang-led electoral fraud and terrorism" aiming to block progressive forces to gain seats in Congress. *Ryllin T. Mallari Jr., PIA Southern Luzon Bureau*

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS
Protesters wave as the Bicol Park in Davao City to demonstrate against the Commission on Elections for what they said was massive disenfranchisement of voters. MARVIN DELOS REYES (INQUIRER.NET)

Protesters want Tagaytay polls declared a failure

TAGAYTAY CITY—Tension gripped this city after policemen blocked about 500 members and supporters of the Anakpawis party-list and a disqualified mayoral candidate from holding their protest rally in front of the city hall.

The rallyists were urging election officer Alexis Tendad to declare a failure of elections because of alleged massive cheating and vote buying during the May 10 elections.

The rallyists also condemned the killing of Anakpawis member Willy Lemos, allegedly by a village chief a few hours after the elections in Barangay Crossing Meadow.

Miriam Mendoza of the Magdalo Party accused Tendad of being biased against her when she removed her (Mendoza) name from the list of mayoral candidates in the city on May 10.

Tendad's decision came after the Commission on Elections disqualified Mendoza from seeking the post for violating the rule on substitute candidates.

Mendoza claimed that the Comelec decision was not yet executory, she said she has evidence to show massive vote-buying on election day.

Angelito Calde, Anakpawis provincial coordinator, accused the Tolentino clan of masterminding the killing of Lemos.

Nikko said Lemos was shot twice by Dariolo Tolo, barangay chief of Crossing Meadow, after a heated arguments on May 11 near the victim's house.

But Supt. Eduardo Ballaran, town police chief, dismissed allegations that the incident was an act against Anakpawis members nor it was election-related.

He said Tolo had a disagreement with Lemos a long time ago.

"The canvassing of votes was already finished when the incident happened. This is just an inflated issue. Edralyn Lemos, the victim's wife, however, belied Ballaran's claim. She said Tolo gave P1,000 to her husband to ensure that the voters in their place would support Tolentino.

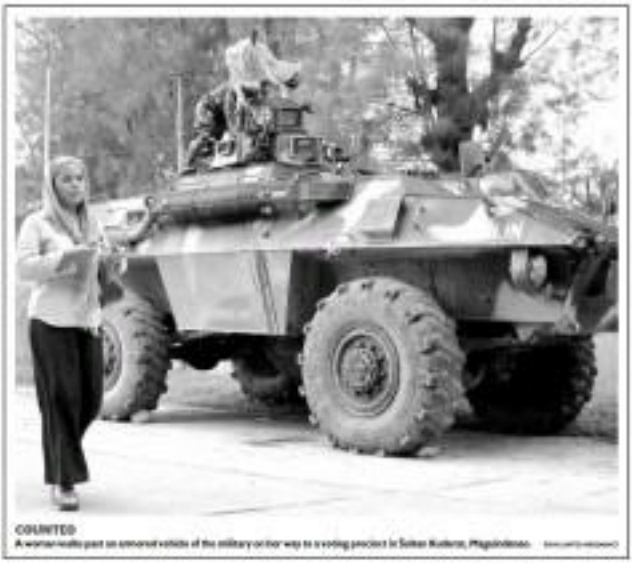
"But my husband did not give in to what Tolo asked him. When he found out that Tolentino did not get the votes they expected, he killed my husband. All we want now is justice for my husband," Edralyn said.

Ballaran said the suspect considered and is now detained at the Tagaytay jail. *Marlon Ramos, PNI Southern Luzon Bureau*

ELECTION 2004

PROVINCIAL TABULATIONS

REGION I		**REGION V**	
ILOCOS		**Albay**	
Congressman (1st Dist/2nd Manila City)	proclaimed	Congressman (District 1)	proclaimed
Mayor (1st Dist/2nd Manila City)	proclaimed	Mayor (Legazpi City)	proclaimed
REGION II-A		**CAMARINES SUR**	
CAGAYAN		Governor	proclaimed
Governor	proclaimed	Congressman (District 1)	proclaimed
Congressman (District 1)	proclaimed	Congressman (District 2)	proclaimed
Congressman (District 2)	proclaimed	**REGION VI**	
Congressman (District 3)	proclaimed	**NORTH COTABATO**	
Congressman (District 4)	proclaimed	Governor	proclaimed
Mayor (San Pablo City)	proclaimed	Congressman (District 1)	proclaimed
		Congressman (District 2)	proclaimed



COUNTED
A woman walks past an armored vehicle of the military on her way to a voting precinct in Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao. (EDILUZ CALINGASAN)

Kin of slain backer of mayor cry justice

SAN[illegible] Laguna—Relatives of the slain supporter of the incumbent mayor here have tagged the supporters of his rival for the mayoral post as the suspects in the killing.

Mauricio R. Tamayo[illegible] 54, mother of victim Prudencio R. Castañeda, 43, a widower, said her son was riding in a motorcycle with another companion when shot dead at close range and stabbed by the suspects despite the victim's pleas for mercy while on his knees.

She said that after the victim was shot several times and stabbed by the suspects, the persons smashed his head with a bayonet.

Castañeda was an employee of the Sangguniang Bayan office and was a former supporter of incumbent mayor George Pangilinan.

Insp. Nestor S. Corachea, Siniy police chief, in a report sent to the provincial police office, identified the suspect as Wilson de Torres, of Sitio Dagang, Barangay Bandian, Siniy town, who had been earlier unidentified male companions.

The suspects were still at large as of late Monday afternoon according to the report.

Tamayo, justice for my son's death. I don't know why my son, who was physically defeated, would be killed so brutally by the gunmen?" the sobbing mother said.

Mariñas quoted the survivor-companion of her fallen son as recalling to her that incumbent Vice Mayor Amadeo T. Perez, 53, who is running for the mayoral position, was in the vicinity and giving orders to end the life of her son Prudencio.

Ilio Pozo, alias interviewed by the Inquirer, vehemently denied the allegations and said he was about 50 meters away from the shooting.

He said he was not aware of the killing. When he heard about the commotion, he immediately left the scene.

He also denied having any gunmen or bodyguards with him. "As young (sic) and of the new model of politicians, we don't tolerate goons and bodyguards, unlike the incumbent mayor (illegible) who always has a security group and never without any bodyguards with him."

Pozo also expressed surprise why he would be suspected when the victim was his relative and neighbor.

Castañeda and Pozo lived on Caballero Street. Their homes are[illegible] meters apart.

A police report on May 7 said at about 11:50 p.m., May 6, along the provincial road in Sitio Bagong Silang, Barangay Bandian, the town, Castañeda was shot dead by the suspects with the use of a .45 caliber[illegible] gun of unknown caliber.

Police said the attack was public, uniformed and the suspects are now being hunted by the authorities.

Corachea said a case of murder is being already filed at the sala of Judge Nicolas V. Pajil Jr. (Reports from PDI Southern Luzon Bureau)

ELECTION 2004

Men behind women power in Bulacan

ROUNDUP

CITY OF MALOLOS—Most women officials have been elected in Bulacan but most of them still occupy the posts left by their spouses.

Mayor Evelyn Pandino of Doña Remedios Trinidad (DRT) was reelected to her second term. Pandino ran in the 2001 elections after her husband, Mayor Eufracio Pandino, was slain in an ambush in December 2000.

In the 2001 elections, Evelyn Pandino, received sympathy votes due to the slaying of her husband and defeated her husband's political rival, former policeman Pelo Valenzuela.

This year, Evelyn won her second term against Vice Mayor Rodolfo Cuzzioc.

In Plaridel town, Teresita Tiu-Uy, widow of former Mayor Jaime Uy, won against veteran broadcaster Ferdinand Javier Pacomio Mayor Uy died of a lingering illness while in office in late 2002.

Javier, the former vice mayor of the town, succeeded Uy.

In Norzagaray town, Matilde Legaspi replaced her husband, Mayor Feliciano Legaspi. Matilde Legaspi's son is Jaime Cesar.

There other women mayoral candidates—Caridad Sevilla, Salbadia Sinquerra and Vice Mayor Rosalie Lazo—lost in their bids. Sevilla is the wife of outgoing San Miguel Mayor Santiago Sevilla while Sinquerra is the wife of outgoing San Jose del Monte City Mayor Eduardo Sinquerra.

Lazo of Bulacan town is the wife of Board Member Jose Lazo.

Bulacan Rep. Lorna Silverio, who was reelected as representative of the third district, started her political career as mayor of San Rafael town in the 1998 elections.

Silverio's husband, Ricardo Silverio, was the representative of the third district at that time.

Newly elected Hagonoy Vice Mayor Marivic Reyes-Alvendia is the wife of reelected Rep. Wilhelmino Sy-Alvarado of the first district. Rep. Alvarado is a former mayor of Hagonoy town.

Marivic Alvarado was first lost to Atty. Ogie as mayor of Hagonoy in 1998.

Reelected Rep. Regilino Nicolas of the fourth district, is a former mayor of Sta. Maria town. Her husband, Ricardo Nicolas Jr., also a former mayor of Sta. Maria, died in 1999 while in office as Bulacan vice governor. (Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk)

Twists, turns in local polls

■ Former Nueva Ecija Rep. Zaldy Villaluz, who lost in his bid for governor, left doubly defeated with the poll losses of his husband, reelectionist Rep. Raul Villaluz, and son, Board Member Christopher, as mayor of San Isidro town. Villaluz's other son, 2nd Municipal, however, won a seat as provincial board member.

■ For the first time in history, Ecija, a couple will sit as mayor and vice mayor of a town. Marcial Vargas, a former three-term mayor of Aliaga town, won as mayor, while his wife, Shirley, the outgoing mayor, won as vice mayor.

■ Husband and wife teams will also rule two towns in Ilocos Sur. In San Vicente town, incumbents reelected couple Jose Silvanda III and Nancy Tabanda, as mayor and vice mayor of the municipality. The Tabanda clan has ruled the town for about 30 years. In Magsingal town, outgoing Mayor Alfonso Sorio Jr. won as vice mayor while his wife, Board Member Arlene Sorio, won as mayor.

■ Husbands, wives and their children are also taking center stage in various towns in Ilocos Sur. In Vigan City, outgoing Mayor Eva Marie Singson Medina ex-Imeldific bet sent to her husband Ferdinand Medina. In Narvacan town, outgoing Mayor Charito Zamgoza hands her post to her husband Edgardo Zamgoza.

■ In Ilgay town, outgoing Mayor Tyrone Cuenhea leaves his post to his wife Felicia Guerrero. In Santiago City, Ilocos Sur—to place her husband, Mayor Jose Ariel Singson Jr. in Santa Cruz town, outgoing Mayor Teresita Valle hands her post to her husband Virgilio Valle. In Candon City, Mayor Eutiquio Singson leaves her post to her eldest son, Allen Singson.

■ The "umbrella team" of former First Lady Imelda Marcos won as mayor of San Juan town. Benjamin Sarmiento, a former Marcos aide, replaces his son, outgoing Mayor Bernard Sarmiento.

■ In La Union, a husband and wife team will rule Bauang town for the next three years. Mayor Linda Ponsaelle was reelected while her husband Salino serves as vice mayor.

■ A father and son will also rule two La Union towns for the next three years. They are George Pinson of Luna and his son Geo, who was elected mayor of the neighboring town of Bangar.

■ In Pangasinan, outgoing Mayor Alicia Pulido won as board member of the first district. Her husband, Nestor Pulido, succeeds her in the town's mayoral post.

■ In Abra, Antonio Disimo-ag defeated his estranged wife Lourlyn Disimo-ag in the mayoral contest in Penarrubia town.

■ In Catanduanes but, former Speaker Amadeo Perez[illegible] won over former Teodoro Cruz, former provincial manager of the Metro Manila Light Railway Transit, as congressman of the third district. See his mediocre performance against Cruz, who suffered in the first hours of the tallying, indicated that the political influences of their clan has diminished compared to the previous elections. Perez[illegible] son, Bello William, better known as "Wimpy," one of the "four gadz" boys who failed to impeach Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., was defeated in the gubernatorial race by Villaluz's son, Luis Raymund Villaluz Jr., who won by a landslide victory.

■ In Albay, Ligao City mayor Fernando Gonzalez beat Alfonso Benitez, father of incumbent Albay Gov. el Francis Salceda, for the gubernatorial seat, while Gonzalez' wife, Linda, a political neophyte, trounced Alex Siebens, the governor's brother. Attorney called the Richard Brothers "Siebens or "Sapsap." "Tuang" is a local card game.

■ Despite the strong influence of winning 3-incumbent Rep. Carlos Imperial in the second district of Albay, he failed to save his incumbent Richard Pierre Imperial from losing to incumbent mayor Noel Rosal who sought re-election on the strength his performance. [illegible]

■ Incumbents Mayor Alex Almoza and Vice Mayor Rocky Maravilla (Lakas-CMD) of Polo, Oriental Mindoro, who were earlier sidelined by about 30 New People's Army rebels while in a campaign caravan in Barangay Campamento, both won by a landslide over their opponents. They were greeted and had Tuesday lovers of his constituents also won. Aramas declared that he was still receiving death threats even after talking with the NPA and the military.

■ Reelectionist Mayor Carmen Reyes-Cuñas (MD) of Los Baños, Laguna was continuing to serve his chosen road, ex-Mayor Sonia Lapiz of the RNP Power's supporters had complained that Lapiz violated the law when they are often be organically sent inspectors to carry out [illegible] polling places.

■ Reelectionist Gov. Carmencita Reyes and Rep. Edcel de Rosas Jr. of Muntinlupa have been proclaimed winners in their respective posts. The mother-and-son team has worked on the development of the small municipalities, especially on the screening of the circumferential road that facilitates the flow of goods and services along its areas.

Despite the full backing of the Bernardos' erstwhile political ally, reelectionist Gov. Jennet Ng-ong[illegible] for Silang, Cavite Mayor Nelson Mallangayan for the House seat in the third district of the province, and his political lioness Crispin Remulla won over Mallangayan by a narrow margin, Crispin's proclamation on Monday completed the strong hold of the Remulla clan in Cavite, as incumbent Vice Gov. Jolo Revilla, Rep. Gilbert Remulla (2nd district) both toppled their rivals by large margins. (PDI Northern Luzon Bureau and PDI Central Luzon Desk; Ourialford Theis, Aaron Favila[illegible] Jr., Michael Cabrera, Melvin Viveña, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; Angelo Abella, contributor)

ON GUARD
Ballot boxes were transported to Carabao City under heavy guard as the start of the elections May 10. (MIKKO ELLERA TRANSIENT)

Evardone is now gov

The provincial board of canvassers on Monday proclaimed former assistant provincial secretary Rodolfo P. Evardone as governor in Eastern Samar. Evardone, 58, a member of the Liberal Party, won by a landslide with a margin of over[illegible] votes against his closest rival, incumbent governor Clotilde Japson-Nicart. Evardone will serve the governor and former governor Romeo Jalosjos in most of the 23 municipalities of the province. The former governor, who "co-exists" the Kabalikat ng Maghahanap Pilipino, is the youngest to be elected governor of the province.

Pol official killed

ILIGAN CITY—Unidentified armed men gunned down the political bosom officer of Maigo, Lanao del Norte Mayor Nasrudi Pundato on Monday morning. Jimmy Selno's death was the first post-election violence case recorded in the province. Selno, 58, was assisting 74 inside his house in Barangay Libaya-Bayabas around 6 p.m. when the armed men arrived and opened fire with their high-powered rifles and automatic pistols. Police said Selno died of multiple wounds in the shoulder and head. The suspects fled after the attack. Lanao del Norte provincial police director Supt. Lani Sang said they were still investigating the attack in the hope that the identities of the suspects and their motive could be uncovered. But Pundato said he was certain that Selno's death had something to do with the recently concluded balloting. He said Selno was very vocal against his political opponents. Pundato was proclaimed winner after he garnered 6,456 votes against his rival, Lanao's Pundato, who only got 5,000 votes. *Jeffrey P. Almoite, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Proof of fraud

DAGUPAN CITY—Lawyer Antonio Evasco said his group has already gathered enough proof to file a formal protest against alleged fraud and cheating in the May 10 elections. Evasco said the admitted he and his group the elections included "direct buying" through the handing over of campaign kabits with a P 500 bill attached to it; giving away of cash and P50,000 worth of organizations; payment of P500 to poll watchers; and intimidation of voters by village officials. Evasco said the voters were told to vote for Fernando by the particular candidates and were told after casting out of the precincts. Evasco said the affidavits were submitted to the Election Protest Appellate Committee (EPAC) of the Commission on Elections (Comelec). *Rey Pelayo, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

BLAZE OF COLORS
Lechon, Quezon, exploded in a blaze of colors as the town celebrated the San Isidro Labrador Feast in honor of the town's patron saint. Everywhere you went in the town, decorations like these (made of rice paste) were common.

Vote count for Cebu gov, execs suspended as protests are filed

CEBU CITY—The provincial board of canvassers (PBOC) has suspended the counting of votes for provincial candidates pending resolution on the pre-proclamation protests filed by rival camps.

Rafael Alipanga, Commission on Elections (Comelec) director for Central Visayas, said returns from 11 towns and three component cities could not be canvassed due to the pre-proclamation protests filed by rival camps.

The lawyers of three gubernatorial candidates, Demosthenes Garcia, Celestino Martinez II and John Gregorio Osmeña, filed pre-proclamation protests, alleging that the COCs, the election returns and statements of votes from these areas "were fraudulent, manufactured and padded."

While the PBOC had already tasked the petitions questioning the returns from nine towns, it could still not canvass the returns from these areas because the candidates had said they planned to elevate their cases to the Comelec en banc.

"All the lawyers who filed the petitions have already manifested of their intentions to appeal the ruling. They have seven days to file their appeal and seven days for the Commission to rule on their appeals," said Rogelio Bernardo, Comelec assistant regional director and provincial board of canvassers' chair.

Transfer

In the meantime, he added, the canvassed returns would be transferred to the Comelec provincial office for safekeeping.

The delay has stalled the canvassing and proclamation of winners for the positions of governor, vice governor and provincial board members.

Based on the partial Comelec results released on Sunday, Garcia was ahead in the gubernatorial race with 246,171 votes followed by Martinez with 235,567. Osmeña was in third place with 131,706 votes.

The results were based on the returns from 36 towns and three component cities.

No canvassing of votes was made yesterday although five towns denied into petitions filed by the lawyers of the three gubernatorial candidates, asking to exclude the returns from these municipalities on the ground that these were padded and fraudulent.

But Benjamin said the Comelec did not find any evidence of fraud on the returns from the towns of Moalboal, Argao, Dumanjug, Tuburan, Tabogon, Oslob, Bolpon and Bantayan as well as San Francisco on Camotes Island.

He said there was no proof to support allegations that the returns and the certificates of canvass from these nine towns were prepared under duress, coercion and threats.

Other petitions

The Comelec has yet to rule on the separate petitions to exclude the returns from Bogo and Medellin and the cities of Lapu-lapu, Mandaue and Toledo.

Benjamin would fly to Manila today to endorse the results of the canvassing of votes for the national candidates.

Alipanga had appointed provincial election supervisor Ed-win Cadungog to preside over the provincial board of canvassers in the absence of Benjamin.

Alipanga said the Comelec could not allow any more delays in the canvassing, as she expressed hope that the Comelec would finally rule on the pending petitions so that canvassing on the protested COCs would start and the proclamation of the winners would follow. *Jolanta R. Bautista, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Comelec seeks guns for its officers in Sulu

ZAMBOANGA CITY—The Commission on Elections in Western Mindanao has agreed to provide firearms to at least two of its election officers assigned to Sulu because of threats.

Renato Magbanua, assistant election director for Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-tawi, yesterday told this bureau the firearms would be issued to the election officers of Patikanan and Indanan towns as soon as they arrive here.

He said losing candidates in the said towns have been pressuring the election officers, whom he did not identify, not to commission fraud by ranking Comelec officials.

Magbanua said because of the intense pressure, the election officers and other election officials were forced to stay inside the headquarters of the Army's 103rd Infantry Brigade in Jolo.

Magbanua said soldiers would normally escort election officers wherever they go because of their natural additional protection like carrying their own firearms.

He said other officials there to be reassigned that risk their love to life. "So we have to import election officers especially those who have finished their functions elsewhere for replacement, but we need more substitutions," he said.

Southern Command chief Lt. Gen. Ben Dolorfino said the Comelec does not need permission to do personnel because it is still election period. *Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

tanong ng Bayan
ANO ANC TV 7
Sino ang tunay na nanalo sa San Juan: Jinggoy o JV?
Hinging pinoy lightning telenan para bisin-sibalitang San Juan.
Ibig sang kandidato sa pagkat ang magbigay!
Aman Calaocan, Malabon, Navotas at Valenzuela. Sabi ni Mader, sabi ni publico!
Sagutang plan. Ilang gala. sa ABC.
ABC

INQUIRER Northern Luzon
Editor Joe Gonduyan
Baguio Chief Rolando B. Fernandez

The Igorots in 1904 St. Louis exposition

SOUVENIR postcard from the fair

THE IGOROTS butcher a dog for the controversial dog feast.

SOME of the Igorot participants in the St. Louis World's Fair.

By Eric Salvador
Benguet, Mt. Province

THIRTY were among the first batches of Filipinos overseas workers sent to the United States when they participated, for a fee, in the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis, Missouri.

The exploits of the Igorots of the Cordillera in the exposition, also known as the St. Louis World's Fair, from April 30 to Dec. 1, 1904, are being remembered on the centennial of this "greatest and best exposition in the world" in that time.

Various sources say that over 1,000 Filipinos were brought to the St. Louis exposition. Records show that the Northern Luzon delegation included 79 Bontoc Igorots (Mt. Province), 20 Ifugaos Ifugaos (Benguet) and 13 Tinggians (Ilocos). These groups were lumped together as "Igorots" to the fair.

There were also delegations from the Negritos, Mangyans and Bagobo tribes, and the Visayans and Moros.

The Igorots were brought to represent the tribes from the Philippines, and the "most remote natives."

The international fair became a sizable platform of the US' role in promoting its new-found status as a world power.

More than years, some of the descendants of the wild mobile, the Bontoc Igorots who went to the US, reveal the stories of the grandest fair where their ancestors took center stage.

Igorot display

The young Igorots who were recruited to the fair were "walking participants." Most of their were neighbors and friends coming from poor Igorot villages like their families wanted to take the journey of adventure outside their villages.

Mara Cumbo, 80, the eldest daughter of the participants Fonokaba and Pedro (who were about 14 and 16 years old, respectively, in 1904), said her parents went to the US to earn a living. Lightish it sounded.

Although there were some objections from village elders, some ran away to join the group going to Missouri. Pedro Bolotoc, then 16, walked over the trails reaching to the coastal town of Carolon to board the fair. They boarded a boat to Manila, where another vessel took them to the US.

While in the ship, the Igorots joined other participants. From other countries for the more than a month's journey. To while the time away, they performed dances for fellow journeymen.

Victoria Antolo-Apolinar, 85, said this area been her father, Antero, curved his first money.

Most of the fair participants were single. Some were married before leaving the Philippines and others got married and born children while in the exposition.

Apolinar, whose parents Antero and Tappy were about 15 and 16 years old, respectively, during the fair, said her eldest sister Sylvia was born in Minneapolis, which her elders called "Sinnapus," before 1908.

The 1,000 hectare (47 acre) section of the Philippines' ethnological display was only featured Cordillera natives from Northern Luzon but the Igorots themselves as "living exhibits" in villages that they built.

The Igorots performed the jar song (dance), played the ginggo (same gong) and demonstrated the *ubi* (weaving), smithing and other rituals to the delight of patrons.

The organizers wanted the Igorots to "represent their cultures," but through time, the performances boiled down to the Igorots becoming a source of entertainment for their American audiences.

Josephine Tillamoya, 84, granddaughter of Bontoktoka and Dalikin, said her grandmother was a very good basket weaver.

"She (Dalikin) would weave practically anything and the Americans would buy any item made by the Igorots. That is how they earned additional money," Tillamoya said.

The Igorot men, holding spears and axes, would perform fresh warrior dances following the beat of the gongs. The strong warriors displayed the feats of traditional wrestling that all would devote time among their audiences.

Animals are first their audiences, as amusements, would throw coins at them and applaud. Those live performances were repeated every day throughout the six months fair.

During intervals, the organizers would ask the wealthy clothed by cents to wear coats while performing their usual gong playing.

Dog feast spectacle

But it was the group's butchering for eating dog meat that spurred a spectacle and controversy. Dog eating became a major attraction and the biggest crowd drawer among the exhibits.

In Bontoc-eating (eating dog as a ritual sacrifice) is held sacred.

Kuri Bibat, 78, a Bontoc elder and senator, said the dog area usually the last animals to be butchered after a successful ritual/ex (headhunting) by the village warriors.

The dog is offered to perform the ritual called *mumbaki* which is believed to drive away the spirits of dead enemies. The dog is also used as a medium to heal people believed possessed by bad spirits.

The ritual is usually performed to mark a headhunting celebration, but at the St. Louis fair, this was repeatedly performed by the Igorots.

Some Bontoc elders said the Igorots who frequented the dog meat during the fair might have decided to increase body heat to counter the bitter winter in the US.

Anthropologist Rodolfo Alabla of the Amalgamated Investment Bank in Washington, D.C. said some accounts noted that some Igorot participants got sick after eating dogs bred in the US.

"Maybe got sick of dog meat, especially because of the high fat content of American dogs, that they would sometimes bury (them) at the edge of the festival grounds," Alabla said.

Apolinar said her father Antero would tell her stories about the spectacle of the dog feast.

"The dog feast made the Igorots famous and they were probably in the whole world to dog eaters," Apolinar said.

Dog meat is a popular delicacy in Northern Luzon and is served in some specialty restaurants and eateries in Baguio City and La Trinidad, Benguet.

Financial success

The fair was not only a success by display of American power, but also a financial success. Records say the Igorot village was the biggest money earner, with an average of $30,000 pesos a day.

After the fair some of the Igorot participants remained in their villages in the Philippines, while some joined exhibitions fairs in Europe and at the Lewis and Clark Exposition in Portland, Oregon, between 1905 and 1911.

Some of those died during the harsh winters and their bone have remained unknown until today.

While some accounts talked of supposed exploitation of the Igorots, descendants of some participants said the risk-taking opened opportunities to other villagers.

Antero, who worked as a houseboy for American couple Albert and Maud Jenks while in Boston, had a considerable command of English and was one of the Filipinos presented to US President Theodore Roosevelt in the White House.

Antero returned to his village to recruit more people to go to other fairs. He also became the unofficial governor of Bontoc in the early 1900s because of his "experience abroad and knowledge in other areas."

Apolinar said her father would encourage all his children to go to school.

"My father valued education very much. When we were children, we did not like to go to school, but he (her would) often ask the police to check on us if we are in school or something (truant)," she said.

This, she said, was the legacy her father left.

"My siblings, my children and my grandchildren were able to study. Most of them are in the (US, practicing Christ respected profession," she said.

Villanueva said her grandmother Pomokaba learned how to count numbers and was always on the library to read the newspaper during the fair.

Pomokaba learned to read in the school built in the exposition through the help of an American teacher. He later used the acquired knowledge in participating in the union lottery.

Alicia Antonard, 74, daughter of participant Antonard, said her father returned to the village with some gold.

The elder Antonard had the gold worked into a necklace it was gold doubloon and ring-type (gold earrings). He used gold to buy a gun (jar) that is now a precious heirloom of the family.

Some Bontoc and Ibaloi were somehow left behind in the fair.

Jaime Pelit-Ibett, anthropology professor at the University of the Philippines Baguio, said some poor women who went to the fair were able to marry the Ashang (members of the Caucasian class in Bontoc society) on their return.

"The women were also welcomed to participate in village decisions or activities in the pre to political unit composed of elders, because they were able to relate other things and experiences outside of the village," Ibett said.

DANCING during the fair.

Benguet folk not 'shy mango,' even in politics

By Delmar Cumbo
Baguio, Benguet

THE EXPRESSION "shy mango" (read: me-ego) is often used to describe how shy or timid Benguet people are.

In fact, it is also used to explain why Benguet politics is peaceful, where guns and goons do not prevail.

But Dr. Meer Fides Demapan, an archaeologist and cultural anthropologist, said elections in the province were generally peaceful because of cultural reasons and not because the people are "shy mango."

He said the expression was more of a statement that has been an issue and should not be used as a cultural basis to explain why Benguet politics is nonviolent.

"The shy mango is a joke, if I were bent," Palaganas said. "The statement has been misused to mean that the Benguet people are literally shy and could not assert their rights or hold strong views forward."

Palaganas said "shy mango" is actually a label created by foreign historians (it said one who is) to assert that Benguet people were shy was guilty of "ethnic bigotry."

Mr. Bobbi Palaganas admitted that Benguet people were really "reserved, cautious and restrained." But these traits should not make them "shy mango," he said.

In politics, he said, those traits should not be the basis in winning the votes. "Most voters are farmers or belong to the working class, and they expect political candidates to act like them."

The politicians, in turn, must behave as "reserved and restrained" to convince voters of their sincerity for public office, he said.

The explanation has its history, said Palaganas, who teaches at Saint Louis University and University of the Philippines Baguio.

Origins

The Benguet people trace their origins to three dominant tribes—Ibaloi, Kankanaey and Kabigatan. Other minor groups include the Iwaak, Ilaw-an, Bago and Kalapuan.

Benguet's history reveals that these groups were then divided into four classes—the Ambiguet (nobility), maked (warrior), ubeng or subeng (non-nobility) and the baquero (servant class).

Palaganas explained that Benguet's big names in politics were descendants of the Ambiguet, although some political leaders were products of intermarriages between the classes.

The typical politician has to perform cultural role, he said. "The aspirant must first offer to preserve the supremacy of the elder over the other class and at the same time, plan much and humble before the voters to secure victory at the polls."

Assuring politics is an assurance of dominance within the nobility and the struggle shows that indeed, there is no place for being shy," he said.

"The peacefulness of the election campaign is attributed to politicians conforming to the basic character trait of the voters."

"The modern Benguet politician can be extremely haughty and docile," Palaganas said, adding that these characteristics would make the "shy mango" system.

Palaganas also cited examples to dismiss the theory that Benguet people are shy. Those are the late Mateo Cariño who unveiled his bold rights against the powerful and the battles waged by the native-opposed Spanish invaders.

METRO
Editor Alberto S. Ulanday

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Belmonte wins new mandate

By Tina Santos

QUEZON City reelectionist Feliciano "Sonny" Belmonte, ranking up an insurmountable lead over his opponents, was proclaimed mayor-elect by local board of canvassers yesterday afternoon.

The final official Comelec result had yet to be released, but partial results showed Belmonte with 329,324 votes, some 158,000 votes more than runner-up, former Mayor and opposition candidate Ismael Mathay Jr.

Lawyer Ma. Isa Abalos, Quezon City election officer, said it was mathematically impossible for Mathay to catch up with Belmonte's numbers.

Bautista proclaimed

Reelectionist and Belmonte's running mate, Vice Mayor Herbert Bautista, who also enjoyed a wide margin over rival singer-turned-politician Dingdong Avanzado, was also proclaimed vice mayor-elect.

"The people have spoken. The task before us now is to consolidate all our efforts to pursue projects that will be for the benefit of the people," Belmonte said as he thanked his supporters and the people of Quezon City for giving him a new mandate.

Belmonte attributed his victory to his administration's "track record of good performance for the past three years, particularly in providing quality services, especially to the underprivileged areas."

The board of canvassers earlier proclaimed the winners for the third district city council. They were Jorge Bocobo Jr. (64,996 votes), Precy Formoso (63,648 votes), Wesselina Liquiden (59,827 votes), Dante de Guzman (59,008 votes), Julius Cesario (57,892 votes) and Elmella Sorra (56,820 votes).

THE YOUNG AND THE RESTLESS
A boy waves oblivious of Manila Bay's rushed evening active takes a stroll along the seawall along Roxas Boulevard in Manila. EDD ANGLO

Voters snub husband-wife teams

By Edson Tandoc Jr.

THE ERA of husband and wife running in elections apparently does not sit well with voters—at least in northern Metro Manila.

In Caloocan City, Mayor Rey Malonzo lost the congressional race, while his wife, Dipi, failed in her bid for the mayoralty. Worse, Malonzo's son, Ronald, also lost as councilor.

In Malabon City and Navotas, Rep. Ricky Sandoval won reelection but his wife, Jeannie, lost the mayoralty in Malabon.

Still fighting

As in Valenzuela City, Mayor Bubbit Cariño is still fighting a close race for congressman. His wife, Rita, however, is lagging behind in the mayoral race.

Rep. Enteng Rodriguez, who was proclaimed Caloocan City mayor the other night, told the Inquirer that the elections showed that city residents "have grown tired of the trapos and have wanted to dislike the Malonzos."

Of the five husband-wife tandems for elective posts, only Luis Asistio and his son, Macario III, were in the winning circle.

Luis has won as congressman, while Macario III showed signs of joining the winning councilors in the city's second district.

However, Macario Jr., who was the city's mayor for 13 years, also lost.

First loss

Malonzo was mayor for nine years. This is the first election he had other family members running for elective posts. This is also the first time he lost an election since he joined politics in 1988.

Malonzo lost the congressional race to Oscar Malapitan, who, just like Malonzo, won his former seat.

Saying they were cheated, both Malonzo and Asistio refused to concede defeat. Malonzo has filed a petition to declare a failure of elections in the city, while Asistio said that he was preparing to file a complaint before the Commission on Elections.

And while Schwarz said the elections showed the people's disagreement with political dynasties, Malonzo said there was convenience not to read, or vanquish, votes for the Malonzos.

Beyond family

According to political science professor Benito Lim, the election was a sign that voters had started looking beyond family politics.

"The family background is minus important. But votes are also won considering an added factor, track record," Lim told the Inquirer in a phone interview.

He cited the election results in Quezon City where Mayor Sonny Belmonte is winning over former Mayor Mel Mathay Jr.

Belmonte's win is also trailing Senator Ramon Magsaysay's unofficial race in the city's second district, over the Mathays' bailiwick.

"Slowly, the voters are learning," he added.

Surprised

While Gigi Malonzo has accepted defeat, the responses are prise at her husband's loss.

"He saw his performance. We know he is the most capable for the post," she added.

Fernando Nadres, spokesperson for the Carlos couple, said the elections in the city shocked her.

"Nagsigaw sila. Hindi dahilan ako pag nadaliin ito ang 'dalawang... Dahil ang alam namin marami ang tumitig dito [at] sa botohan. Nakakagulat ang kinalabasan," she said in an interview, explaining why Rita Carlos was lagging behind.

But Belmonte reminded hopeful Rita Carlos herself wife. "Ito ngayon dapat ayaw nga nandun. Patunay ng kapangyarihan ng Malonzo sa kanyang nakasakit. Wala na kong nakikitang ibang kondidatong ganun."

The buzzsaw tried to touch the couples Carlos and Sandoval but they were not available for an interview.

Arson eyed in P2.5-M QC blaze

FIRE swept through a densely populated area in Quezon City before dawn yesterday and destroyed 50 houses, displacing some 100 families.

Government's three residents of Area-5, Amidan Road corner Ortigas Avenue, Barangay Holy Spirit, were taken to jail after neighbors accused them of starting the blaze that burned P2.5 million in property.

Fire victims told police that at about 1 a.m., the smell of gasoline emanated from the house occupied by Carlito Balaoro Sr. and his sons, Carlito II and Romero.

Light materials

Moments later, flames were seen coming from the house of the Balaoros and spreading to adjacent houses, which were made of light materials.

However, Insp. Samuel Nabo of the Quezon City Fire Bureau, said that they had yet to determine the cause of the fire.

Irate neighbors ganged up on the father and sons, who suffered burns and contusions, all over their bodies before being rescued by police beach.

Brandishing bamboo and his sons were brought to the police station for investigation.

Narrow alleys

The blaze was put out at 6:30 a.m. and no one was reported injured.

Firefighters said they had a hard time putting out the blaze because the passageways leading to the blaze were too narrow for fire trucks.

Firefighters from all over Metro Manila responded and helped put out the blaze, which reached the second alarm. Rina Santos

Power firm employees light up lives of Filipino children

By Zara Sengalio

"IT'S SOMETHING that you're looking for, something fulfilling," says Roberto Laudit of Illuminations Corporation's employee engagement program called Tanglaw. Instead for the sense of giving a ray of hope to young people who may have lost it.

Laudit is an employee volunteer, and she can't be happier. She and 20 other Tanglaw volunteers recently trained 20 masterfellows, ages between 12, in acting at the Manila Zoo.

Eco-challenge

The trip was part of the program's summer wildlife exposure, which she had in its lineup is a biddle eco-challenge, trips to mangrove plantations, and visits to the fossil's plants. After all, Mission is the country's biggest independent power producers.

Some 100 employees signed up for Tanglaw the result of a survey that asked the workers which advocacies were closest to their hearts—the top answers were children and the environment.

If Mirant has a soft spot for the young, it's probably because it's quite a young company itself at 33, and most of its employees are below 40 years of age.

Paid time off

Management is very supportive of its employees' desire to help the community. Volunteers like Infante are allowed to take paid time off from work to engage in any Tanglaw activity.

Aside from the summer wildlife exposure, the program has a component that allows the employee volunteers to encourage, tackle and take the lead in an event or undertaking of his or her own design.

"I think it's high time companies really get their feet wet in employee volunteerism," says Lisa Crisostomo, executive director of Hands-On Manila or HOM.

HOM is a foundation that provides flexible volunteer opportunities for interested individuals and organizations. HOM helped develop and inform Mirant's program.

"There's literally a lot of talk, but I think it's making the decision to take the first step [that matters]," Crisostomo stresses. "Once the company is officially involved, it legitimizes and encourages the employees' desire to truly involved."

Pinoy pride

Tanglaw was HOM's first time to administer a long-term employee volunteerism program for a company because of its success, the program will soon include promoting national pride among the young. "Pinoy Pride for Kids" aims to develop awareness and appreciation of the uniqueness of Philippine arts and crafts.

For Mirant, Tanglaw was a way to weave corporate social responsibility (CSR) into its culture. CSR is one of the firm's three business philosophies—business leadership and environmental stewardship are the other two.

Project Beacon

"We are very serious about it," says corporate communications manager Em de Leon. "It's part of the institutionalizing of the CSR mentality.

At the end of the day, it's not just about business but also about creating out to help others and the environment."

Mirant has other community initiatives like Project Beacon, a barangay electrification program for waterfront development now well on its way to benefiting the 1,300-ish barangay. There's also the carbon-sink initiative in Pagbilao, Quezon, which additional global warming by reforesting some 300 hectares and establishing a 140-hectare eco-tourism.

Truly, tending some spark to the frames of others can brighten up even the most "firmly lit" countries.

Still a young participant in Mirant's summer wildlife exposure trip. "We met people from whom we learned, close mates as happy bit, also discovered many different ways to help ourselves. We learned a lot about animals, too."

Thank you

Another participant, 12-year-old Anela Ann Sampaoda, wrote in a card she made for a volunteer with her own hands: "Dear Ate Ann, thank you... I hope that all of you will be able to make more people happy. Thanks for giving me a chance to enjoy my life."

CLOWNING AROUND
Revelers in clown costumes join the parade during the Makati Grand Parade, which is in preparation for the celebration of Makati's 2040-founding anniversary on June 1. AFP

At age 3 months, Ivan already fighting for life

THREE-MONTH-OLD Ivan Velasco is one brave baby.

Doctors at the Philippine Heart Center diagnosed him with congenital heart disease, double outlet right ventricle with restrictive atrial defect, a condition where the heart has a hole and the right and left atria are displaced.

Although hooked on a ventilator and battling with pneumonia, he is fighting for his life, his mother, Evangeline, said.

Recently, he underwent cardiac catheterization and the results showed he would still be operated on for arterial switching.

The operation is set within this week. However, his parents, Ismael and Evangeline, are worried because they don't have the money for the procedure.

While Evangeline takes care of Ivan, Ismael works as a foreskull production worker in Batangas. But what he earns is just enough to meet their daily needs.

They are now appealing to kind-hearted strangers to help them gather the money for Ivan's operation and hospitalization, which will cost P300,000.

They are also asking the resident to pay for their baby's medicines. Evangeline said it will take a month for my son to convalesce." Evangeline told the Inquirer over the phone.

Interested donors could reach the family at Bonifacio, Labuo, Ligao City or through cellphone number 0917-4715474.

Donations could also be sent to RCBC Ligao City branch account number 1-321-00280-2 under Mary Joy Magalio's name. Joseph Ely

Zobel aide shot dead in Forbes

By Margaux Ortiz

THE SECURITY aide of Rigo Zobel, son of deceased coconut giant and philanthropist Enrique Zobel, was shot outside the Sanmarie de San Antonio Monday night, while the wake for the 61-year-old Zobel was being held inside.

Initial reports about the incident were unclear as the wake was still ongoing and relatives were still inside the chapel.

Staff Sgt. Bernel Cejas, 37, of the Marines, was sitting at the driver's seat of Rigo's Porche, which was parked some 20 meters from the Sanmarie, when two men shot him in the head at about 8:30 p.m.

The police said Cejas, who was hit in the upper portion of his left ear, was taken to Metro Gaiz. Two spent shells from a 9-mm pistol were later found at the scene.

Rigo not target

Cejas died while undergoing treatment at the Makati Medical Center yesterday morning.

According to Senior Insp. Hernante Jose, Makati Police Homicide Section chief, a security guard saw the suspects walking like ordinary beach boys.

"The suspects could not have targeted Rigo because they shot the victim point-blank," Jose said.

He also downplayed the Makati City government's said it would be conducting an NBI on Zobel, the Lakas-Tapkas aspirant—Makati's highest earned—for his contributions to the development of the city.

Lito Asuncion, spokesperson of Mayor Jejomar Binay, said Zobel was largely credited for the development of the Greater Bani area district.

By Tarra Quismundo

AFTER their long presence in Manila's political scene, the famed political clan of Sampaloc is headed for the exit.

For after the city's votes were counted, two members of the Bagatsing family did not get the mandate they assured.

Liberal Party candidates Dan Bagatsing, 58, and Amado Bagatsing, 56, the youngest in the family to enter politics, lost in the race measured raw.

Uncle, tao

His uncle Manuel, of the Nacionalista People's Coalition, meanwhile failed in his bid for congress in the 4th district.

The elder Bagatsing lost to incumbent Rodolfo Biazon of the Liberal Party, who got 56,711 votes. Bagatsing, meanwhile, received 42,409 votes only.

Their losses would mean the absence of the Bagatsings in Manila politics after more than three decades.

Grandfather

The family's patriarch, Ramon Bagatsing, the incumbent mayor's grandfather, was city mayor from 1971 to 1986.

His sons, Dan Dan and Amado, were both elected to the House of Representatives, and served three terms in the same time from 1988 to 1998.

Dan Dan Bagatsing, Dan Ramon's father, represented the 4th district, while Amado Bagatsing was legislator for the 5th district.

"What matters to me now is that the Mayor Dilenda Khan Jose Interna & Land GMA Presidente Macapagal-Arroyo won," Bagatsing told the Inquirer.

A several term Sampaloc councilor, Dan Ramon Bagatsing lost his bid to take the vice mayoralty from incumbent Danilo Lacuna of Koalisyon ng Magkakaisang Pilipino.

Lacuna has been proclaimed and is on his way in San Juan that will last until 2007. He received 280,758 votes, edging out Bagatsing by more than 100,000 votes.

It would be Lacuna's second term to serve consecutive terms as vice mayor. He had served as the city's second mayor and City Council presiding officer from 1986 to 1992.

But 29-year-old Bagatsing assured to have taken his defeat lightly and with a smile.

"I think I had enough time to campaign. But I will be

MAYOR Jose Atienza gets a kiss from his wife, Beng, as Manila Councilor Israel Ramon Bagatsing raises his hand as the winner of the local mayoral race.

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She does not know who she is

By Tarra Quismundo

IF THIS story was based on what she could remember, it would end here.

Marie Rose is the name she has been called since she came to stay at a detainee shelter under the care of nuns on Tayuman Street, Manila.

It was the first name the nuns thought of to call the mysterious woman about whom they knew nothing.

"She was brought here unconscious, dark and very thin. She has undergone a lot since," said Sunita Mibles, a helper at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Home for the Sick and Dying Destitutes.

From PGH

Marie Rose was brought there on April 16, 2003, from the Philippine General Hospital, where she had been confined for two months.

At the PGH, she was admitted on "Mike E" on Feb. 24 of the same year.

She was rushed in the hospital after she met an accident somewhere along the Manila area, nobody knows.

The only detail about the mishap known to PGH is that she was hit by a bus as she crossed the highway.

No claimants

"She was brought to the ER [operating room] where she was operated on, then she stayed in a ward for a month, and nobody claimed her," said Jaquie Domingo, a social worker from the PGH Medical Special Service.

Marie Rose was treated for acute subdural hematoma, a blood clot inside her head. Unconscious and unable to communicate, according to Domingo, a hole was cut down her throat, a tracheostomy, through which a tube was inserted.

The tube, her Mibles, because she means to feed Marie Rose.

Sisters of Charity

Domingo, who looked after Marie Rose throughout her stay at the PGH, was the one who referred her to the detainee shelter, administered by the Missionaries of Charity.

"We are the last resort," said Agnella Arayan, one of the nuns who now take care of Marie Rose. Domingo said that it was hard for her to find an institute that would take Marie Rose in, owing to her condition.

But the nuns, who belonged to congregation that was founded by the sister of Mother Theresa of Calcutta, took Marie Rose in, and placed her in an isolation ward in the shelter.

Slow awakening

Only when she woke up sometime between February 2003 to 2003 did the nuns learn that Marie Rose had amnesia.

"She woke up slowly. First, she moved only her fingers, then eventually she opened her eyes. Now she is slowly learning to speak and walk," said Mibles.

Marie Rose is now in Ward 2 inside the shelter with 19 other women, including elderly unable to walk and young ones who are sick but have no more homes to go to.

Mystery

But the nuns and the other patients inside the ward have yet to unravel the mystery behind Marie Rose.

Arayan related that she recently sought the help of the police, but she was told that there were no reports of missing persons there.

Marie Rose herself could only answer "yes," "no," or "I don't know" to queries about who she is.

The scar is partly concealed by her short haircut, which for her mildly curled hair to flow down her forehead, still apparent, too, a her hairdresser's accessory.

Blinded

The accident she had not blinded her left eye, which no longer moves along with its pair. Her right arm, leg and feet, were also debilitated, but she is slowly learning to help herself on a walker.

She could be between 20 and 30 years old. Her memory though steadily inching free, as the rest of it has gone with the time she had spent lying in bed unresponsive for almost one year.

"Oo, Makati," said Marie Rose, when asked whether she really was from Bicol, as she had told doctors once.

In spite, she said she was the third of eight kids. She often remembered having two kids, a 4-year-old boy and a 2-year-old girl.

Like a parrot

"She is like a parrot," Arayan said on cassidy.

Fair enough, Marie Rose only repeated what is said to her.

"Oo, Sta. Maria," said Marie Rose, as her eyes brightened up for a moment. A wide smile revealed her remaining front teeth.

She was asked whether she knew the famous actress but she had the same reply when asked whether she knew comedy king Dolphy former President Corazon Aquino, and not-issued hero Jose Rizal.

Grade 6

"She told me she graduated from grade six," said Arayan, who explained that Mibles there would sometimes give lessons with others, and lastly with nuns.

But she knew how to sing, and even numbered the alphabet song, which she finished only after some broken starts up to letter C.

She also sang a few lines off a wake drama theme song, which she vaguely heard from the radio of her watchmen, Rodila Amarra.

No complaints

"She is kind, and she never complains when asked to do a favor," said Amarra.

She found Marie Rose an unreliable friend, as Antonia, already bedridden, often needed help to reach for things she needed.

She said further that Marie Rose liked giving other patients manages. "She is very active. She is the first one who attends mass," said Arayan.

Marie Rose and some 89 other patients at the shelter attend mass every Sunday. Arayan said that Marie Rose is slowly getting good at praying the rosary.

But more than two years after losing her memory to the accident, Marie Rose is still wondering, though not consciously, for her past, a family, a life.

Arayan could only hope that finding them would come soon for Marie Rose.

Search for dirtiest street

THE METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority is looking for a dirty place where they could transform into a "model area" for the other local government units to emulate.

MMDA Traffic Operations Center Director Angelito Sergel de Claro said the "model area" would prove that it is possible to make Metro Manila clean and orderly.

"We will improve everything in the area, including cleaning the sidewalks of illegal vendors and physical obstructions," Sergel de Claro said in an interview. — Margaux Ortiz

HEWITT survives to Round 2

AFP/FILE

WORLD TEAM TENNIS

Australia trounces US

DUESSELDORF, Germany—Australia defeated the United States and Argentina swept past the Netherlands as the blue group got underway at the World Team Cup on Monday.

Mark Philippoussis and Lleyton Hewitt won rubbers in their singles rubbers for Australia before Wayne Arthurs and Paul Hanley lost the final dead doubles rubber.

Argentina whitewashed the Netherlands with Mariano Zabaleta and Lucas Arnold adding victory in the end of day doubles rubber as wins for Gaston Gaudio and Juan Ignacio Chela in the singles.

Philippoussis (6-7, 7-6, 7-6 win over Vince Spadea was his first in eight matches and he paid tribute to the unity to the Australian team for helping him to end his miserable run.

Philippoussis saved a match point in beating Spadea before Hewitt eased past Bobby Lincpit, 7-5, 6-7, 6-4. Rob and Mike Bryan beat Arthurs and Hanley 6-3, 6-4, in the doubles.

Gaudio came from a set down to defeat Martin Verkerk, 2-6, 6-2, 6-4.

Reuters

Agassi tastes 1st-round loss

ST. POELTEN, Austria—Top seed Andre Agassi suffered a shock defeat in the first round of the St Poelten Grand Prix on Monday, losing, 0-2, 7-5, to Serbian journeyman Nenad Zimonjic.

Zimonjic is ranked 239th in the world while the 34-year old American has won all four Grand Slam titles.

Reuters

Peeler suspended

NEW YORK—Sacramento Kings guard Anthony Peeler was suspended two games without pay on Monday for throwing elbows to the midsection and head of Minnesota Timberwolves superstar Kevin Garnett in Game Six of the Western Conference finals.

Garnett was fined 7,500 dollars by the National Basketball Association for throwing an elbow to Peeler's chest during the incident, which occurred with 12.1 seconds left in the third quarter of Sacramento's 106-97 victory on Sunday.

Peeler will miss the decisive seventh game of the series on Wednesday night at the Target Center in Minneapolis.

The confrontation occurred when Peeler swung his left elbow to the abdomen that sent Garnett, the NBA MVP and a former Timberwolves teammate, to the floor.

AFP

Visualization is the key to Olympic success

CLEAN LIVING

Manuelo Antonio Diego

CONCEIVED under Dad Shirrel of Marikina City is giving a significant shot many results in one of our athletes bound for Athens arresting that elusive gold medal in the Olympics since 1924 when we debuted in the modern Games in Paris. The silver medal victories of boxers Anthony Villanueva in Tokyo in 1964 and Walmerito "Dingoy" Velasco in Atlanta in 1996 were the closest the Philippines ever got to bagging that thus ever Olympic gold. A long time sports die-hard, Madrid is despairing that the athletes we are sending to the Olympics this year stretch a version of Jimmy Linares on "Visualization."

"Who knows," asked Madrid, "through this mental one of our athletes will come home with our very first Olympic gold or gold since we join the Olympics in 1924 in Paris?"

Just recently, he added, a student was thanking Ms. Linares-Serrano her son won in an Asian tennis tournament after her son attended Mr. Linares's seminar on "Visualization."

"I hope you can relay this to PSC chair Tom Bolano or the POC's Celso Dupli."

Some years back, an article published in the Reader's Digest noted that visualization or mental imaging has the same effect as real practice, stressing that a mental athlete knows ways to boost performance.

Athletes—in particular professional players—have been visualizing for decades and name by it, the article said.

Golf legend Jack Nicklaus is one of the exponents of mental imaging. During his prime, he once said, "I never hit a shot without first having a sharp picture of it in my mind. First I 'see' where I want the ball to finish. Then I 'see' it going there: its trajectory and landing.

The next scene shows me making the swing that will turn the previous images into reality."

However, mental imaging isn't a substitute for action but a supplement to it. Said psychologist and ex-author Sonia Dibergold of Mind Power: "You can visualize yourself being a concert pianist, but unless you also practice, it's not going to happen. It's still the doing of a thing that counts."

Imaging, said Shalet Gawain, author of Creative Visualization, takes real effort and practice to achieve results. "Most people seem to find it easier best to practice a little every day."

In the year's Olympics, the Philippines will be sending a host hosts composed of four boxers, three cardiovascular jins, two swimmers, two track and field athletes, one archer and one shooter.

"We are sure to go and down instead to make good in Athens," said boxing chief Manny Lopez, whose sport will be the biggest prospect to win medals in the Olympics."

***

SORRY, BUT IT'S BETTER LIFE TENNIS MINUS: First of all, I'm sorry for not being able to attend last Tuesday's third edition of the annual Phil Cup won by longshot Neal Lazod at the Santa Ana Park. An equally important commitment hooked many weeks in advance prevented me from joining PSA colleagues Jimmy Lucot, Joe Antonio, Alden Contreras and Edwin Gabuitan in the festivities after hosted by the Philippine Racing Commission chaired by Jaime Ongpin and held in honor of my esteemed friend, the late Phil. Director and columnist Camilo "Boy" Montes Jr.

Owned by the popular Bernie Esguerra, Neal Lazod, ridden by apprentice jockey Louie Ballesteros from start to finish, crossing the payoff wire two lengths ahead of Free Wind.

San Diego Force and contending favorite Susana Rosy came in third and fourth, respectively. The only regret in the seven-horse field, Dear Lazod (Your cut of Solmon Lazod) pocketed P240,000.

With Dear Lazod's victory, Esguerra, who also owns the fabled Wind Rivera, again looms as a strong contender to become this year's top horseowner. In 2003, Esguerra emerged the winningest owner with total winnings of P28,231,270.20. He was followed by another popular racing figure, Antonio "Patch" Dyquiangco, owner of the classy import Key Spa.

The youthful Ballesteros, a 23-year-old apprentice jockey from San Jose del Monte, Bulacan, said he was glad that owner Esguerra gave him the big break to ride Dear Lazod for only the first time. "It feels good."

WEDNESDAY
MAY 19, 2004

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

SPORTS

Editor Teddyboy S. Melendres
Assistant Editor Edwin (R). Villanueva

Red Bull seeks key win vs Ginebra

Hapee foils Sunkist plans A26/ Torre: Local chess structure 'flawed' A26

RED Bull Barako hopes to forge a three-way tie in the upper bracket of the standings when it meets Barangay Ginebra today in the Coca-Cola–Philippine Basketball Association Fiesta Conference at the Araneta Coliseum.

Buddy
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TORRE: Mayor's fault

Torre: NCFP structure flawed from the start

By Trina Isorla

THE ORGANIZATIONAL structure of the controversy-ridden National Chess Federation of the Philippines is "flawed" and needs to be fixed to avoid more money scandals in the future, grandmaster Eugene Torre said minutes yesterday.

Torre, the NCFP's first president when the group was formed in 2000 to replace the Philippine Chess Federation, said the federation lacks an organized auditing system.

"It's not that anyone had a hand on [the money scandal]," Torre told the Philippine Sports Commission Association forum in the Manila Pavilion.

"No one is at fault here. The system was flawed from the start."

Torre said the old NCFP board did not foresee that the lack of transparency and organized auditing would spawn financial problems.

"I was hoping that a chess philanthropist would provide us with a [professional] bookkeeper to put the federation's books in order and then after the NCFP mess we [manpower] during my term," he said.

Philippine International Master Christine Rose Mariano was the group's first auditor.

Torre said secretary-general Ismay Torres have been accused of forging the signatures of chess players in an effort to claim allowances for international events.

But Asia's first GM lamented the accusations, saying his credibility was on shaky ground as a result.

In the future, he said, it would be best for NCFP's best interest to tap a professional to handle all money matters.

Cracks showed within the NCFP ranks last year when accusations flew that certain federation officials had misused the funds.

Torre said he was pleased that former vice chairman Cesar Almeda, who has since retired, saw their differences.

NCFP president Dr. Prospero Pichay said an international tournament, the sun-dilak during the opening of the 2004 National Age Group Championships at the Muntinlupa Mall Monday.

"It came as a blessing yesterday that we can consolidate [ourselves] in one day under a theme," said Torre. "We should meet weekly for peace to dawn."

Unyielding Hapee foils Sunkist

By Trina Isorla

PLAYING with little at stake, defending champion Hapee Toothpaste put Sunkist UDT's quarterfinal plans in peril with a 66-62 victory in the PBL Unity Cup at the Blue Eagle Gym at Loyola Heights.

Hapee, already assured of a twice-to-beat advantage in the playoffs, clinched the third due overall with the win, its fifth in 10 games.

Sunkist, which needs a win to own a twice-to-beat edge in the playoffs for the two semifinal berths, dropped to a 6-4 record it now shares with four others.

Ally Tapia's Otis Lotino took the offer in twice-to-beat edge and will face the winner of the Bubble Mentholatum-Welcoat clash in quarterfinals.

Hapee will battle the winner of Sunkist's sudden-death match between Jaypee Bivens and Blatche.

Bivens, Sunkist, Blatche, Mamuka and Lee-Yapee Aurora saw the same court but the Hapee's took fourth place because of a superior quotient.

In the second game, Dennis Miranda buried a jumper with 1.4 seconds remaining to lead Viva Mineral Water over PA 79 victory over Northeast Pantas.

The win saw Viva's 8th win in 10 games, underscoring its role as tourney semi favorite. Without rest in fourth loss in 10 games.

Colorado rookie sensation Reed Juvilla led the Tenth Sparklers with 21 points and six rebounds, while Jimmy Ortiz added 12 points and nine boards as Hapee outrebounded Sunkist, 37-34, to key the win.

"We outsized them in rebounding but we still have to pull," said Hapee coach Jimmy Bondoc, who is seeking his eighth championship in the PBL.

Christian Cantwell tried to rally the Tigers with a triple for a 60-57 count, but Ryan Gregorio sealed Sunkist's chances with his own three-point basket.

The scores:

First Game

HAPEE 66 — Juvilla 21, Ortiz 12, Yu 10, Rivera 6, Cantwell 5, Mendoza 4, Ramos 3, Gozo 2, Tan 0, Gregorio, Agas 0.

SUNKIST 62 — Cruz 15, Jumao-as 11, Velasco 8, Casal 8, Cortez 7, Manalo 6, Reyes 4, Jr. Gozon 3, Palmares 1, Jaymalin 0.

Quarters: 16-15; 34-34; 49-46; 66-62.

Second Game

VIVA 79 — Jones 17, Go 15, Mendoza 13, Ramos 9, Ang 7, Alfonso 5, Cruz 4, Cabahug 4, Cajucom 4, Chua 4, Nieto 2, Co 0, Dimaano 0.

NORTHEAST PANTAS 77 — Tampus 20, Sharma 15, Guevarra 7, Valentino 6, Cruzgayan 4, Cajucom 4, Nieto 2, Co 0, Dimaano 0.

Quarters: 21-18; 40-36; 60-55; 79-77.

A DRIVING Emerson Christie of Hapee is fouled from behind by Alex Compton of Sunkist. RAFFY PINLAC

SPORTSWATCH

Unique swimming meet May 29

A UNIQUE swimming competition is set on May 29 at the Philsports Swimming Complex in Pasig. It will only be open to beginners who have joined the recent Mini Learn to Swim summer programs at different venues and who have not participated in any swimming competitions. Sponsored by Mike and organized by former Olympian and Asian Games swimming champion Rachel Ramirez, the meet will have five age groups to ensure a balanced competition: 8 and under; 7 will years old; 9 to 10 years old; 11 to 12 years old, and 13 to 14 years old, all based on ages as of Jan. 1. Events to be contested are butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, and freestyle at 25 and 50 meter distances. The meet will start at 8:30 a.m., and participants are advised to be at the premises earlier. Entry fee is P1,200 each for 3 SMs and. Registration is ongoing and parties and slots may still be open at 688-4867 loc 888-4433 or e-mail organizer@asiatic.net.ph. Entry fee is P700 per event.

Rookie tops Shell karting leg

CAMSUR, Cavite — After trailing most of the way, Jude Gabriel de Guzman Lopez, who was oddly the only non-lift after the 14th lap and ruled the KF1 Light division yesterday in the third leg of the 2004 Shell Karting Superseries at the Converse Circuit Philippines. Lopez beat early leaders Jojo Vicente Jr. and Jeffrey Ang to complete a historic debut drivers Oliver Aquino and John Paul Dizon. Vittorio Lobregat quits after figuring in a collision on the final lap. Sr. and Dizon also collided on the eighth, while Aquino's engine seized out on the 12th lap and ended his race. Michelle Gregorio and Kristian Rodriguez also pulled off impressive victories in their respective divisions. Gregorio, bogged by engine problems in the past two legs, made her bid unrelated to the premier Silver Class. Bringing in a club record in the final corner lap to win over Phat Ka Mendoza by .05 sec. Ely and Tiara Gutierrez, Lopez and Dizon's Kaizen Racing Class in the final 17 laps but his engine malfunctioned, paving the way for Bongcaron and Ito to snatch the 1-2 position. Light pilot and Rodriguez ruled the Gadet class over Andrew Lucero. Strongarm the Kindgart was runs for titles, who converted over Jose Montes in the 7 HS-MNA Moto Karting.

3½ Ramirez gun for 2nd straight wins

MIRAMAR, Batangas — Young Pyeon Dy and veteran Rudolfo Flaviano gun for their second straight wins in their respective divisions as the 2004 PCSO Grand Prix wages its second leg this weekend. May 29-30, at the Batangas Racing Complex. In his debut, Dy topped the Formula Vee Open Class of the Asian Formula Level the for rivals Yoyoto Cup. This weekend, Dy expects tough nothing against two equally talented lady drivers — Class Ace Bernard and Michelle Bongcaron — in the Formula Toyota Cup sanctioned by the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office. Philippine Shell Corp., Toyota Motors Philippines, Rudolfo Flaviano Motorsports and Mobil Delvac Philippines pack pre-race Tanggol and Mayo Angeles. Flaviano hopes to deliver another big win for Petron Oilfree as he tackles Formula Cup of Beach-Mini, teammate Miguel Herrera and Dominic Ros in the National Touring Car Championship series.

Iloilo hosts tennis challenge

ADIDAS Philippines kicks off its 2004 tennis season with the staging of the Adidas Tennis Challenge 2004 at the Provincial Sports Complex tennis courts in Iloilo City on May 29-30. Featured events are the boys' and girls' 16 and-18 under 12 under 14-under 10 singles and boys' and girls' 12 and-under 10 doubles. Adidas assistant marketing and sports manager Dondy Custodio said the Adidas netfest is organized by Children's Tennis Philippines and supported by SMs. Wilson Lallo with Pldht said the Deadline for registrations is on May 26, 5 p.m., at the Provincial Sports Complex.

Battle of Champions on Saturday

MORE than 100 fights are scheduled in the Battle of Champions 9 Cock Derby, on Saturday, May 22, at noon at the Mandaluyong Coliseum. Substitute weighins is set Friday from 10 a.m. to 12p.m. A guaranteed purse of P500,000 awaits the winner. Other prizes include a brand-new motorcycle, an ice 8, and gadgets. Entry fee is P2,000 per cock. Derby fee is P1,000 per cock. To be fought by Jun Adalia, Hugo Petilla and Mike Bautista. The event requires an entry fee of P4,000 and a minimum bet of P1,000. The champion handler and gaffer get P50,000 and P10,000, respectively. For inquiries, contact 661-71 00 and 0917-531 9082 (Alex) and 0918-929-1124 (Kapo).

3-cock derby started at LPC

CABUYAO from Cavite, Laguna, Rizal and Metro Manila are racing active in another 3-cock derby tonight at Las Piñas Coliseum. The derby slaughter a cash prize of P200,000 for a P6,000 entry fee. Derby hosts are Boxing and Only Mendoza. Entries must be submitted until 12 p.m. today. For inquiries, contact 0919-7849 and 874-2891 (Hotline for derby-related matters). The event is sponsored by Sagupaan Complainer 2000. The winner of Juan Marcos Derby 30 De Perez I and Rommel Carlo of Bautista-Jose (Carmella Pharm) emerged as co-champions in last week's 3-cock event. Meanwhile, the other 3-cock sessions are scheduled on May 22 (Happy Manansala), May 26 (Victor Medina Mahoning and Lucio Tan), May 29 (Pedro de Castro and Jun Mendoza). Hatchlighters are scheduled from Monday to Sunday.

Mendoza's sweaters shine again

HERMES high on the 4-cock victory in Pampanga a few weeks ago, riding the breeder-engineer Arthur Mendoza of Agricultor, Batangas, took another championship in Pampanga last Sunday, 16 May, 3-Cock Derby. Mendoza's gamefowl entry 101 Golden Warrior (from Mendoza's Golden Warrior farm), bolted a 5-beater Derby. "They were carnivore eaters," Farmers said. Mendoza's Sweaters shine on the first match, but handily won this remaining four opponents to dominate the field of 44 competitors. He shortened and commanded his chicken engines. Mendoza clutched various commercial titles in the past three years ago.

CAMP AQUA

The Cubao Camp Aqua 2004 swimming classes being conducted by the Bert Lozada Swim School is now open. Marian Calabroz, corporate affairs manager of Cubao Phils., in share with Anthony Lozada (left) and Angelo Lozada during the swim camp's press conference at the Makati Sports Club. For details, call 563-0513 or 359-1982.

Favorites advance in stormy Subic

SUBIC Bay Freeport Zone — Edelweiss Johnny Arella used his powerful backhip game to hammer troubled Mike Brown of Subic Bay, 6-1, 6-1, and handle seed Diamond Marcos beat St. Benedict's Ely Montero, 6-0, 6-3, Saturday in the start of the men's singles competitions of the National Open Tennis Championships for Subic Bay International Tennis Center here.

With heavy rains inching the world's dam site, the organizing Subic Bay Sports Management Inc. wisely opted to have the matches in 10 courts.

After advancing in this Philex Group 1 event backed by the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority and sanctioned by the Philippine Tennis Association over 12th seed Jhonping Siaon and Stella Jake Harry Rosmahadi.

ARCILLA

Siaon, who put the country in the International sporting limelight during the 1990s when he was a top seniors in the late Elaine Danielsen, Pemeh, Wimbledon, 1.91, downed Jessica Dumado of the Olongapo Tennis Club, 6-1, 6-0, while Rosmahadi wiped Aidan Mendiola, 6-0, 6-1.

Fresh off his victory in the Mandaluyong Open, Arcilla, the country's undisputed No. 1, handily worked out a score in beating Siaon, who at 14 is the tournament's youngest entry.

Montero, a former management graduate, used an array of shots to take the wing out of Montero's big service.

Subic's controversial favorite Dennis John Tiro is out. Killer Jerry Cappon Joseph Victorino and Rolando Raet were scheduled to play last yesterday.

Montero's play starts today with No. 1 Alyssa Libay and No. 2 Bea Zobel expected to handily handle their first round assignments.

Men singles

1st Round (Champion's Cup) 6-1, 6-1, def. Jake Brown def. Diamond Marcos 6-1, 6-3; def. Edelweiss Johnny Arella 6-1, 6-1; Raymond Alcantara def. Alberto Ramos 6-0, 6-0; Leo Lapitan def. Ricky Cortez 7-6, 6-4; Antonio Lim def. Jessica Dumado 6-1, 6-0; Jhonping Siaon def. Aidan Mendiola 6-1, 6-0; Jhon Montero def. Ely Montero 6-0, 6-3; Jhon Capitan def. Jerry Cappon 6-0, 6-0; Joseph Victorino def. Rolando Raet 6-0, 6-0.

National 3-on-3 caging series up

THE ELEVENTH Cebuana basketball experience unit will conduct its 3-on-3 tournament, and the Lilo-Stitch Interstate National Junior Team 3 Challenge will make sure they get to play for the national team.

The national tournament for players 16 years and under is divided into 17 stages and will be held in areas as far south as Pangasinan to as far north as Davao del Norte.

"In my own humble way, we are promoting sports development through the search for future contenders of the nationalteam," said Lilo Philippines general manager Paul Li.

Tournament director Leonardo "Ding" Andres outlines the series timeline TVN teams.

He said the grand champion after the month-long series will be recommended for inclusion in the national junior pool of the Basketball Association of the Philippines (BAP).

Parts: Laguna is the Lilo 3-on-3's first stop beginning on May 22.

Samsung golf tour big guns play Sta. Elena next week

PLAYERS vying in the Philippine amateur golf championship get the chance to test their prowess when the Samsung Amateur Tour's second leg, first of May 15 at the Sta. Elena Golf Club course.

After Korean Kim Chang Hui denied them victory at their home course early this month, the young guns of Manila Southwoods will be out to regain lost ground on the 72-hole tournament hosted by electronics giant Samsung.

Hostilities in the championship does will be held a week ahead of the competitions to the other divisions following a request made by players seeing action in the national amateur tournament on early June or Villamor.

The regular schedule of the second leg on June 3-4 will feature action in Classes A, B, C, and Ultra-men and Classes A, B and C for ladies.

The new season of the tour, co-sponsored by Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, Infocus and the Official carrier, Alitalia. Taylor Made, KING Cobra Golfmakery, Pink Polo Sportswear, Corporation sport and Rogue-G, starts off with an overflow field of 156 players. Media partners are Hiker Boy, Jam 88.3, Wave 89.1, Magic 89.9, 90.9 RT and 1323 DZRH Live.

Ray Blue Champs of the organizing Pasbuena Sports Management Group and prize money awards for the championship will be released this week. Players vying in the other categories will be accommodated next week.

Concepts said their schedule registration for the championship class is still open, the class for the June 3-4 schedule are at most fully booked.

For inquiries, call the PSMG at 635-8818.

BARE EYE

Ricardo Trinidad

RICARDO Trinidad is on leave. He will resume his activities on May 26.

RACING TIPS

AT 11:17 BY MR. BB

ce: Rye 3. Dexter's Sunset 4. Valiant Dream

Race 6—7. Mona 2. Kissing Lion 3. Dexter's Sunset 4. Brad

Race 1—1. Spell Bound/Glory Rule 2. Sound in the Wind 3. Classic Blaze Star 4. Best of Circle

Race 2—1. Majority Love 2. Pop Up 3. Victory Lap 4. Daddy Go

Race 3—1. Material Kids 2. Jaime's Princess 3. Feast of Diamond 4. Zaitsubaru

Race 4—1. Acoustic de Rio 2. Lit

Race 5—1. Vitality 2. Security Star 3. Cool O Bet 4. Blue Dancer 5. Perfect Hero

Race 6—1. Mona 2. Kissing Lion 3. Rosette Queen 4. Kissin' Tyme 5. Terminal Sound

Race 7—1. Nominations Kids 2. Risk and Hardy 3. Hallogal 4. Happy Hip 5. Family Day 6. Winning Prize

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MAY 19, 2004

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

B 1

BUSINESS

E-mail at business@inquirer.com.ph
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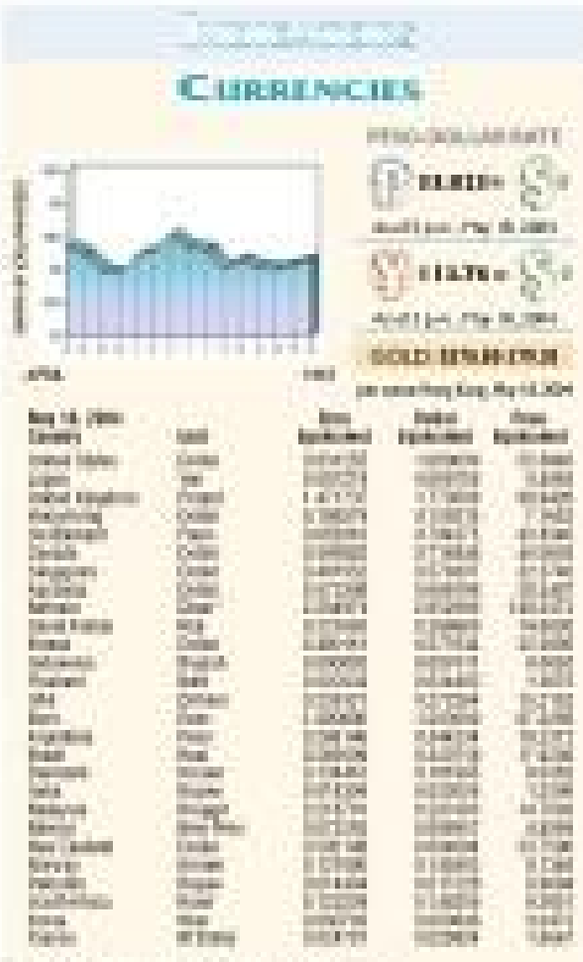
John Paolo O. Rivera
Business Editor Carole S. Martinez

Gov't braces for surge in inflation



By Clarissa S. Batino

THE MACAPAGAL administration is bracing for a surge in inflation this month and next on the back of increasing fuel price increases, a P1.50 fare hike to take effect next month, and higher consumer spending due to the opening of classes.

This month, the government is projecting inflation to hit 4.6 percent year-on-year, or the fastest pace since January 2001, from 3.2 percent during the previous month.

Inflation, or the rate at which prices of goods and services go up, stood at 4.2 percent in April based on 2000 prices. Every time the inflation rate goes up, the price buying power of consumers goes down.

Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri said these factors could drive consumer prices to the higher end of the 4.5 percent government target by the end of the first half before local price subsidies and other items help mitigate the combined effect of higher fares.

"The expected inflation in May is 4.6 percent. We foresee an increase in oil prices," Neri said in an interview.

Inflation based on 2000 prices averaged at 4 percent in all of 2003 and at 3.7 percent based on 1994 prices.

Neri said the inflation in June could remain at high due May-to-January based on 2000 prices primarily to the implementation of a fare increase coupled with other factors that could drive prices of basic goods higher.

The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) on Monday approved a petition by jeepney operators to raise fares to P8.50 for the first 4 kilometers and P1.50 for each succeeding kilometer from the previous rate of P7.50 for the minimum distance and 75 centavos for each additional kilometer.

Ordinary bus fare was also raised to P8.00 to P9.00 for the first 4 km.

NERI

Neri urged fuel importers to review their prices to avoid another round of increases.

The fare adjustment would take effect in the first week of June.

Neri said the fare increase alone could already push inflation up by about 0.6 basis points year-on-year and is equal to 100 basis points on "every peso hike republic bus would increase inflation by about 40 basis points."

Every 10 percent added into the price of fuel would jack up inflation by about 47 basis points, according to Neri.

"But these times overlap so it is not right to add the impact of the fuel increase with that of transport because most of the inflationary impact of a fuel hike took into the bus hike," Neri explained.

Neri said he hoped that some of the inflationary factors would be cushioned by lower wholesale food prices as have given the expected impact that will also reduce.

Chicken, pork imports pushed to lower prices

By Abigail L. Ho

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry is pushing for the importation of chicken and pork to stabilize prices that had been rising due to supply shortage.

Trade Undersecretary Adrian Cristobal Jr. said in a news briefing yesterday that importation of these agricultural goods would only be on a "temporary basis," to assist farmers and supply retailers.

"The prices of chicken have been rising the past months. We're pushing hard for the importation of chicken, even on a temporary basis. We already have a mechanism in place," he said. "Pork prices have been stable at P160 to 180, but that's still high compared with last year at P130 a kilo. The problem is simply across Metro Manila."

He said the DTI had already discussed the matter with the Department of Agriculture, explaining that local poultry and hog raisers could not longer meet the growing local demand with their current production.

Local poultry raisers, in particular, had been asking the government that they could meet local demand, but has so far not been able to do so, he added.

"They're around the government, that they should be allowed to import to supply the prices have now reached P130 to 160 from just

(CONTINUED)

LONG WAIT IS OVER

Tax perks for SPVs finalized

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT has finally issued the much-awaited revenue regulations for the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) Act of 2002, a move that is expected to encourage banks and other financial institutions to dispose of their bad assets through SPVs.

"We hope more will engage in SPV transactions now that the revenue regulations have already been issued," said an official of the Department of Finance.

Although the SPV Act was enacted into law in December 2002 and took effect in April 2003, a necessary step, namely that the Bureau of Internal Revenue finalized its revenue regulations which the Department of Finance had also approved.

Revenue Regulations No. 3-2004 details the coverage of the tax incentives under the SPV law, and how companies may avail themselves of the tax perks.

Tax incentives provided for by the SPV law are the major factors that will entice banks and other financial institutions to sell their non-performing assets (NPAs), and thus improve their financial performance.

But while the SPV law has been in effect since January there has not been any major SPV transaction due to the absence of the guidelines on how should be availed of the tax incentives.

The high level of NPAs is considered as a major burden in the country's financial sector. Non-performing loans of commercial banks alone already stood at P350.39 billion as of February this year. NPAs are bad loan cases of banks, the value is real and other property owned or acquired (ROPA).

The country's banking industry had earlier been cited by the Asian Development Bank as having the highest non-performing loan ratio among economies affected by the 1997 Asian financial crisis.

TAX EXEMPT TRANSACTIONS UNDER THE SPECIAL PURPOSE VEHICLE ACT OF 2002

- Transfer of an NPA to a Transferee Bank/non-bank SPV
- Transfer of a real and other properties owned or acquired ("ROPA") by a Bank/Quasi-Bank to an SPV
- Planned equity infusion/acquisition of an NPA by a Transferee Bank/Investor
- Planned transfer of an NPA by a Bank party to a contract to a Transferee Bank/Investor
- Transfer of an NPA to a Transferee Bank/non-bank SPV
- Transfer of an NPA by an SPV to unrelated party
- Transfer of a Bank to an SPV in a Bank party
- Planned transfer of an NPA by a non-bank to an SPV
- Planned transfer of an NPA by a Bank party to a Transferee Bank/Investor
- Transfer of an NPA to an unrelated third party
- Transfer of a Bank to an unrelated third party

Stocks end at 6-week low

(Stories continue on Page B2)

Gloria Maris to invest ₱1B in nationwide expansion

By Michelle V. Rosca

RESTAURANT chain Gloria Maris Food Corp., the only profitable business unit of Benson International Holdings Corp., is set to invest about ₱1 billion in the medium term to establish 50 more branches nationwide.

David Jr., Benson Holdings executive vice president, told reporters that Gloria Maris—which franchises and operates Chinese-style restaurants—has decided to engage in full expansion after posting positive sales performance last year.

They also hope to tap more lucrative opportunities in the provinces.

Gloria Maris reported that its current 18 branches posted gross revenues of ₱1.2 billion last year, and are expecting to record ₱1.3 billion in revenues this year.

Ito said Gloria Maris would be investing an estimated ₱20 million for every branch that it would put up over the next five years. He added the three branches that would open next year would signal the start of their expansion.

The division of Benson Holdings to expand Gloria Maris is an indication that the holding company is focusing more on its restaurant unit more in order businesses...particularly the ones in the fast food retail industry—are experiencing losses.

Other companies owned by Benson Holdings include Pantao Development Corp., Weldon Development Corp., Eat More Development Corp., Bonafied Restaurants & Development Corp., New Quintessence Commodated Restaurant Inc., PDM Design Inc., PDR Land Inc. Philippine Subways International Corp. and Cleveland Systems International Corp.

Ito said all of these are currently losing since the PHP billion financial crisis struck.

Aside from closing up some of Gloria Maris branches, Benson Holdings also hopes to put up other restaurants Ito said.

He said that Benson is also planning to put up a restaurant in the South to cater to the Muslim community.

He added that the company is negotiating with Universal Studios of the United States over the planned franchise of Jim Brown's Chelsea.

Jim Brown's Chelsea is the restaurant owned by Universal Studios.

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FAR EAST MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

FPHC to sell shares in Nasdaq-listed firm

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

FIRST Philippine Holdings Corp. (FPHC) again is looking to sell its remaining nine million shares in Nasdaq-listed BEF Technologies, Inc.

FPHC chair Oscar Lopez said their shares in BEF would be freed from a six-month lock-up in October. They could then sell its shares, according to prevailing market prices.

BEF is a Silicon Valley start-up company, specializing in global positioning chipsets for electronics and automotive industries. It is led by a Filipino businessman.

Lopez told stockholders at a recent meeting that over the past seven years, FPHC has accumulated 2.2 million shares in BEF at an average cost of $1.40 per share.

It sold 1.1 million preferred shares, or half of its 2.1 million shares in BEF last January to recover its investment and settle maturing debts. As a result, FPHC recognized a gain of ₱330 million on the sale.

"Since then, BEF has undergone a successful initial public offering in the US and its shares have held well at above $16 per share," Lopez said. "We are taking it to a six-month lockup that ends in October, at which time we would have the option of selling the rest of our shares for a handsome profit if the price continues to hold."

He was also optimistic that over the next eight years, FPHC would be able to retire its remaining ₱73 million debt.

FPHC settled all its obligations that matured last year.

Lopez said FPHC would be upgrading out the repayment of its remaining loans over a seven-year period from 2005, or at an average of ₱30 million per year.

BTr holds out, debunking rumors of cash problems

T-BILL RESULT of treasury yesterday held out against the markets, only partially accepting bids for the seven-year treasury bond despite lower rates offered by the bidders.

While the average rate for the seven-year bond yesterday stood lower at 10.77% percent, the BTr's auction committee only accepted ₱3.806 billion worth of bids compared with the scheduled borrowing of ₱4 billion. The committee rejected ₱194.698 billion worth of bids.

"If we are having cash problems, we should have accepted all bids," said National Treasurer Rhia Figueroa, who is also chair of the auction committee. "But we are capable of rejecting (bids), and so we have proved them wrong. There is no problem with our cash position."

The seven-year bond average of 11.77% percent was 22.5 basis points lower than the 11.996 percent posted in the April 22 auction.

Some market players, mostly scanning of banks, earlier speculated that the government might be having cash difficulties. The cash problems supposedly would have led the government to accept some of the market, leaving officials to accept bids despite the low rates.

Figueroa bit the market's penchant to cite political uncertainty to mark higher interests or to dollar moves to buy government securities. — Michelle G. Ayroso

Chicken, pork imports . . .

(Continued from page B-1)

PHI a month ago. *We're already* getting complaints from wet markets and groceries, mainly about lack of supply and high prices," he said.

He said the DTI would be working closely with the BA for the importation of chicken and pork to ensure that consumers would be able to enjoy enough supply of both at prices lower than the current levels.

Aside from chicken and pork, Grimbol said the DTI was also contemplating flour imports also because of rising prices.

Alex Lim of the Chamber of Philippine Flour Millers said flour prices had gone up by 15 to 20 percent since January due to high freight costs and the softening of the peso against the dollar.

He said flour used to be priced at ₱20.8 a 22-kilo bag in January, but prices had now gone up to the ₱600-per-bag level.

"China is now in purchase between 1.8 million and 10 million bags this year, so prices may still go up," he said.

Grimbol said the DTI would be meeting with flour millers and bakers so as could get a clearer picture of the pricing scenario in the coming days.

Aside from chicken, pork and flour, he said the prices of other commodities have remained stable, despite the PL increase in July, product prices that local oil firms implemented over the past four days.

SEAPOINT RESOURCES CORPORATION
Makati IT Center Bldg., 150 Nan. Cor. J. Puyat Avenue, Makati City
Telefax No.: 897-91-10

NOTICE OF ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the regular annual stockholders' meeting of SEAPOINT RESOURCES CORPORATION will be held at the Rooms, 606-606 YMA, Level 5 Podium 4, Rockin Plaza, Ayala Cor. Sen. Gil J. Puyat Avenue, Makati City on Wednesday May 26, 2004 at 2:30 p.m. The order of business at said meeting will be as follows:

1. Certification of Service of Notice;
2. Determination of Quorum/Call to Order;
3. Approval of the Minutes of the last Stockholders' Meeting held on 27 May 2003;
4. Approval of Management Report and the 2003 Audited Financial Report contained in the 2003 Annual Report;
5. Confirmation and Ratification of all acts, contracts and investments made and entered into by Management and/or Board of Directors during the period of 27 May 2003 to 26 May 2004;
6. Election of nine (9) members of the Board of Directors for the ensuing year including Independent Directors;
7. Appointment of External Auditors;
8. Amendment to the By-Laws;
   a. Adoption of Election of Independent Directors
   b. Other Matters; and
10. Adjournment.

Please be advised that the record date of stockholders entitled to vote at said meeting shall be 27 May 2004. Registration for the meeting shall commence at 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 26, 2004 at the above venue.

(Sgd.) CARA SANTOS-DUIS
Corporate Secretary

DISCLOSURES

ELECTED directors of **Equitable PCI Bank Inc.** were Antonio Eu, John Go, Ferdinand Martin Romualdez, Gregorio de la Paz, Eraer Bautista, Rene Buenaventura, Anthony Cowley, Ludgardo Fadullon Jr., Atty. Luz Ilumbres, Ramon Jabar, Genevieve Go, Peter Go Portes, Reynaldo Palmares, Teodoro Pinpin and Rodolfo Reinoso.

SCOTT Javier, assistant corporate secretary, was re-appointed reporting officer under the Manual on Anti-Money Laundering of **Lepanto Consolidated Mining Company**.

PSI Leasing and Finance Inc. bought 570,000 of its own shares at ₱1.30 each.

ELECTED directors of **Manila Equity Ventures Inc.** were Luis Manlio Jr., Jon Ramon Manlio, Dynamus Manlio, Roberto Manlio, Enrique Manlio Jr., Jesus Ortiz and Roberto Romulo.

NAT'SLAKSA Electric Philippines Corp. will start importing all its Panasonic color television models from affiliates in Japan and Malaysia to enhance its competitiveness in the local market.

FILIPINAS Fund Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 8, 9 a.m. at the Sun Room of Manila Polo Club, Makati City. Only stockholders of record as of April 9 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

KNOE Philippine Properties Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 16, 10 a.m. at the Cebu Shangri-La Hotel, Mandaluyong City. Record date is on May 24.

ATS Holdings Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on July 6, 12:30 p.m. at the Technological Institute for Advanced Studies, PCIBC Plaza, Makati City. Stockholders of record as of May 21 will be entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

T & J Prime Holdings Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 28, 2 p.m. at the Function Room 7, Top of the City, 24/F of Citibank Tower, Makati City. Stockholders of record as of May 27 will be entitled to vote at the meeting. *Compiled by Blanche C. Tolosa, PDI Research*

Junior Forbes Park

THOSE who have been aspiring to live in Forbes and Connaught but could not get past the sticker shock may look later on upmarket Metro Manila subdivisions.

Such as McKinley Hill Village at The Fort and of McKinley Road are being offered at an average price of P81,000 a square meter, which is about the going rate for the entry Bifan-side lots within Forbes and Dasma.

But since McKinley Hill lots are also smaller, averaging 220 sq.m. as against Forbes' 1,000, the price comes down to a more manageable P5.76-million/lot.

Developer Megaworld, which is trying to chart its condo-centric, CBD-condo image, is even allowing a more generous 33-meter height restriction for the future houses in McKinley Hill, as against Forbes' 9-meter ceiling.

Like its more famous neighboring villages, McKinley Hill will also be gated, to keep the mallrats and riff-raffs from opting on the aspiring rich and the downsizing rich.

One upside of McKinley Hill is that property taxes are supposed to be lower in The Fort, given the former's military camp is actually part of Taguig. The upside may also be its downside, for the status conscious. Taguig somehow does not have the same cache and old money ring as Makati.

But then again, Ayala Center was but a swamp five decades ago.

Another one bites the dust

MAYUMI SUZUKI, Hiroshi Philippines has decided to completely stop manufacturing and assembling television in the country. It is cheaper to import them from Japan and Malaysia.

Starting August, all Panasonic color TVs sold locally will henceforth be imported.

He by hiroshi outfit on imports and high raw material costs, the globalization devaluation, double-whammy locally made Panasonic TVs accounted for only about 6 percent of total Philippine Panasonic sales in the first quarter of the year.

It simply did not make economic sense to continue with the manufacturing operations.

It is not clear immediately what Panasonic intends to do, with the closure of its TV operations, with its spending plans in the multi-thrusted end of Antipas Bonanza near Antipolo. The factory site produces washing machines.

The Panasonic plant, adjoins Mitsubishi's, whose car sales incidentally have also stabbed downhill in the past years.

Taxing spin

THE REVENUE-STRAPPED Department of Finance is making noises about taxing text messages. **The subliminal message is that the multi-billion addiction of Filipinos has been getting a free ride all these years.**

The truth is, text messages have not escaped the 30 percent VAT pulse. If you doubt this claim, check your cellular phone bill.

Heard through the grapevine

PHILIPPINE Airlines and Cebu Pacific are both considering **imposing fuel surcharge on their domestic and international fares in view of the historic high oil prices.**

(Email: cashtalk_pdi@yahoo.com or cashtalk_pdi@hotmail.com.)

LBP 3rd biggest bank

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE DEVELOPMENT Land Bank of the Philippines has overtaken Equitable PCI Bank to become the country's third largest bank.

LBP's total assets expanded by roughly 12 percent to P286.67 billion in the first quarter from a year ago.

In a press briefing Monday night, Land Bank president Margarito Teves also announced that the bank's net profit in the first quarter hit P635 million, representing 29 percent of its full-year target.

At the rate we're going, we're confident that we can hit our net income target of P2.15 billion for this year," Teves said.

The first-quarter net income marked an 8.5 percent increase from 1976 million a year ago.

The increase was attributed to the increase in loan revenue as well as the bank's effective cost management programs.

Revenue from fees expanded by 13 percent to P1.22 billion while foreign exchange earnings grew by 21 percent to P703.million in the first quarter.

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PEOPLE at WORK

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Editor Raul G. Marcelo
Associate Editor Regina Galang Reyes

Fate turned accountant into radio veteran

By Cecile G. Sarcia

AMEC-one (Unreserved website, radio contributions to his popular Radio provides entertainment by way of music and courage. It's also a reliable source of news and information.

Synonymous with radio is the name Joe Taruc, broadcaster and vice president and general manager of dzRH1, Manila Broadcasting Company (MBC). Taruc can be considered a veteran, having been in radio for 36 years. As anchor "Saling Bisan" on dzRH1, a news program which airs daily (except Saturdays) at 5 a.m. to 8 a.m. and again at 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. While he has many responsibilities for an executive with responsibility, he still finds time to anchor the program.

Besides doing his news programs, Taruc manages dzRH1, which, according to him, is the only radio station transmitting from Metro Manila which can reach as much as 99.7 percent of the country's total land area. "This is validated by ad agencies," claims Taruc whose upcoming dedication in his job is noticable. Not usually he expects the same dedication from his staff. "But, as a boss, I'm sure to get along well," he says, adding that while he's strict, he's personally concerned about his staff and is always ready to listen and to help if he can.

Unexpected career turn

Becoming a radio broadcaster was not in his plans, maintains Taruc. But fortune plans are subject to the whims of fate. He took an unexpected turn.

CAREER TALES

He right years. He was hired as an accountant/auditor by BBC in 1966, became vice president and comptroller in 1969 and assumed his present position in 1999.

Challenges of reporting

Field reporting is easier than days, commends Taruc. He observes, "It's more specialized. Each reporter is assigned to his own beat. I remember her reporting several hours at the same time. In the old days, we had to be very resourceful and resilient to establish our own contacts. But also took more risks and there was more integrity in the profession." Today, reporters are spoonfed, he laments, and there is a lack of integrity and honor.

Adds Taruc, "Reporters have to be substantive. They have to be readily accessible to the producers. They have to be sincere and honest to reporting. They have to work hard and practice discipline in my case, difficulties and challenges have made me learn my job more."

Being in broadcast media has its perks and advantages. The most significant of these for Taruc is being able to go to different places and meeting new people from all walks of life. What's also gratifying," he says, "is that people recognize and honor my name. They identify me with radio." Being in media has enhanced and developed his personality and prospective, making him more confident and sure of himself," he adds.

Gift of gab

Taruc confirms that radio has not lost its mass appeal. He says there are people who still rely on radio, and they usually tune in to the early morning and late afternoon news, public service programs and to many sports on duotone. "He would not be able to survive if people don't listen to it," he says, pointing out that a radio broadcaster must be able to all life. This he does, in addition, with facility and ingenuity. Perhaps, it is this gift for gab that has brought him so far. Contrary to popular belief, that beat, "he is a good, well-modulated voice makes up only 20 percent of the requirements of a broadcaster.

What serves as constant inspiration for Taruc is his long struggles with poverty which he was able to overcome. "I was born into a poor family," he recounts. "But I was determined to finish my studies." Which he did, largely through scholarships. He was a consistent honor student. Says Taruc, "I learned many things really in life, and one of those is that we should not blame God or curse for our hardships. We should look at these hardships as challenges that we can rise above. Another thing I learned is that we must work hard and work honestly for whatever we want out of life." Clearly, these personal lessons have been heed.

TARUC

Aspire as mentor

Looking back on his career, Taruc remembers the highlights, foremost of which was getting to know the late Manny Pacquiao, the man. Manny is the early seventies, prior to Martial Law. "He was one of my first major assignments. I was supposed to shadow him for eight months, from 11 a.m. to midnight. Manny was very brave and courageous, very candid and straightforward," Manny (now) and in many ways, reveals Taruc.

The broadcaster's encounter with Manny was unforgettable because it was through him that he met his wife, Angelina Reyes. "She was his office secretary and I follow him with her," says Taruc.

He and his wife Angelina have been married for 33 years and are blessed with a daughter and three sons, the eldest of whom, Joe Jr., is following in his father's footsteps. Joe is a senior reporter of CNN, Channel 7.

At this point, Taruc feels he has everything he wants and has achieved his goals. He says he'd like to quit radio and retire within 10 years. Already, he semi-quit radio by after his father in Makati and to Nueva Ecija, managing a small resort he has put up in Cuyahoa and tending his orchid farm.

How do you do public relations?

By Bob Ruster

THIS month's question comes out of the blue—out of the blue newsroom of my local morning paper, that is. A fellow newsmen with a story to pitch about her company wanted to know how she could get it in the newspaper. Here's her answer:

First, I have to explain media to you the way an old media hand explained it to me. There's "news," she said, and then there's "stuff." Distinctions, ours, are predicated on deadlines. That's "news." Everything else that's "stuff." And since "stuff" isn't "news," it just normally covered by the media unless someone brings it to the media's attention, tremendously somewhere around dinner time and could use the exposure or endorsement or reporting.

Selling "stuff"

Your challenge, therefore, when you've put a story you want in the news, is to sell your story to news reporters. How to do that? I've listed some tips below. For more help, don't read a book. Read the paper or watch TV newsbox which stories are "news" and which are "stuff."

Then ask yourself: Is this piece like "stuff" to the media? That means will be an educational experience.

What's your book? Your book is about readers your story timely and interesting. A book can make you the calendar (a romance story now Valentine's days); or something else that's currently in the news (how to spot potentially violent employees after yet another highly publicized shooting incident). Remember that many people are struggling with coping with the hot and this over-touch. But don't expect the media to develop an angle to make your story timely; that's your job.

Interesting story

Can you tell a compelling story? Have you've caught fire with your

WORKING WOUNDED

Bob Ruster

book, you've got to lend you with your follow-through. Practice by telling your story in the corporate cafeteria, on airplanes or even at family gatherings. Shorter always beats longer.

Do you target an individual? DON'T do a blanket mailing to lots of media writers. DO target individuals—columnists and beat reporters. Take into account their beat and style, then develop a pitch that's right up their alley. I can tell you that anyone who takes the time to tailor something specifically to me always gets my attention.

Short is better

Is your information concise? I can't begin to tell you how many people I get sent me 30 pages to learn about their problem. I've got my legal briefs, medical records, sworn statements filled 4 times. Have my readers—not editors get the point? Where appropriate, use journalese, less is more. If he needs more information, he'll ask for it.

Do you feel guarded? No one likes a thousand pitching stories. You couldn't think of all the reasons I'm not interested in your story? Put yourself into the news. So, when you don't hear back or get "no" for an answer, let it go. Start preparing your next story.

You know what the irony of "pitching" is? Journalists would "pitch" as much you need to get it sold. So follow these tips and you'll up the chances that you'll score.

Here are the results of our last unscientific poll:

—Couldn't do a better job myself, 13.7%

—Couldn't do a worse job, 40.3%

—They haven't discovered it yet, 45.9%

(Mr. Ruster is based in Seattle, Washington, USA. E-mail him at bob@workingwounded.com.)

BayanTel builds culture of high performance, excellence for customers

By Jaden Raja

BAYANTEL transformation and turnaround has begun to take shape and it is anchored on achieving it business boost, with this for organizational and ensuring dissatisfaction.

In the last three years, BayanTel has undertaken to build a high performance culture driven by the realization need to meet and surpass customer expectations. Shaped by a new corps of values, action, teamwork, sensitivity and productivity while focused on customer satisfaction, BayanTel is dynamic management wave, BayanTel slowly managed to overcome constraints and is now headed in the culture transform of competitiveness and business viability.

It is not to say that the company has moved clear of tough waters, but with the new culture of excellence and success in place, BayanTel is on a stronger footing and better equipped to ride the strong waves arising from stronger competition and pitfalls in the marketplace.

Culture of performance

In 2003, BayanTel launched the Corporate Coaching program to drive the culture of performance and success emerging within the organization, as it seeks to identify strengths and reward individuals and groups who gave exemplary performances during the year and to correct behaviors that are not in sync with the core values of the company.

Second Coaching is the centerpiece of the company's annual awards and recognition initiatives that support the overall business objectives of the organization. The performance metrics used to determine the awardees were agreed upon at the start of the year and were aligned to the strategic goals of the company.

Recently, BayanTel Chief to four recognized Coaching awards night, where individuals and groups from the sales and support groups were recognized and given prizes.

In typical BayanTel fashion, the affair was filled with fun and TV knowledge and experiences. Business awardees the solutions to the company's daily secret and proceeds to enter the lives of this rule, McDaniel, and the rest of the management team from the bottler management of bad meetings. And so this night, with the cheering and the being happily over after, meeting after meeting ...

Not boring

Well, the book is definitely not a bore. And after it was published, the author is being inundate to help meetings in life, he applied in turning this book. He en-

LAURO Gregorio Emdon (center) was adjudged as Top Seller of the Year. Above with BayanTel chief finance officer Gary Olivar and chief consultant Tonio Palicuna.

but was killed as "the Summer Nights," where employees come in dress best summer outfits to enjoy a sumptuous buffet and a program hosted by Mr. Tonio Torres. The band Cords Lanza also performed to the delight of the employees.

BayanTel chairman Oscar Lopez, chief executive Tonio Palicuna and chief finance officer Gary Olivar led the BayanTel officers who attended the affair.

During his speech, Mr. Lopez assured us that Lopez Group's support and readiness to the BayanTel management team and commended BayanTel for its efforts to support this tradition.

Winners

The top individual winner was Lauro Gregorio Emdon of BayanTel's corporate and business markets, who earned a trip to El Nido in Palawan and P60,000 as top seller of the year for posting the highest billed net revenue contribution.

The International Business Unit-ITSG, which handles the company's businesses with correspondents partners and the company's accounts payable, earned the best performing member of the year and the P30,000 incentive, driven by its focus to international prepaid callcards.

BayanTel's vice president for human resources and organization development Nelsy Pasa II stressed that reward failing is not based on popularity but is it just a subconscious.

Actual performance counter-versus targets were used and were carefully evaluated and validated by a committee composed of senior service of the organization to determine winners. At the same time, support groups were identified for surpassing service level agreements with the business groups or considered immensely in their service delivery to customers.

He cited the selection team from human resource which garnered the top collective group award, winning over its counterparts from Billing, Network Operations and Support for their Build and Modernize for collection, efficiency and managing lower-churn rates.

BayanTel chief consultant Tonio Palicuna also challenged the BayanTel workforce to continue its commitment to the success and growth of BayanTel, citing BayanTel's 1Q per cent revenue growth over last year's performance for the first two months of 2004. "Hopefully, we would see different Coaching awards next year as we would truly ensure a culture of high performance in the organization."

Book shows how to give life to boring meetings

From page B1

Being said, an important activity, various seminars and books on how to conduct meetings have proliferated. Out of this plethora of information comes a book entitled Death by Meeting: A Leadership Fable about solving the most painful problem in business. Its author is Patrick M. The Table Group, a San Francisco Bay Area management consulting firm, and "how-selling author of "The Five Dysfunctions of a Team."

The book opens with the plight of fictional character Casey Mitchell, founder and CEO of Top Software, a Silicon Valley software firm. It keeps his company afloat from year to year. Though his company is the hottest bucket in sports video games, there is a boiling inside and outside the company that perhaps the company has not really realized its full potential or is about, has been underachieving.

Mysterious malady

Things turn very bad, when Mr. Daniel, in an attempt to rev up the plodding company sells out to Pharaoh, the nation's second largest maker of video games, while still maintaining management of the company. Pharaoh is not from Pharaoh's land of business development, J. T. Hawkins, who quickly points out that Mitchell is conducting really bad meetings and this may get Mitchell's job on the line.

Here's here

Mitchell gets unexpected help from his company administrative assistant Will Swenson, a budding film and television producer with a psychiatric disorder, who manages to bring to light the reasons for the terrible meetings at the company. Delving into his files and TV knowledge and experiences, Swenson narrates the solutions to the company's dark secret and proceeds to enter the lives of this tale, Mitchell, and by way of the management team from the horrible consequences of bad meetings. And so this night, with the cheering and the being happily over after, meeting after meeting ...

Not boring

Well, the book is definitely not a bore. And after it was published, the author is being inundate to help meetings in life, he applied in turning this book. He en-

against their spent on unproductive meetings, the cost of spending this book to everyone on the management level would be outweighed. The book provides a simple, logical and easy-to-follow framework to bring life into meetings and consequently, life to the organization. Meetings reduced to the spirit of the organization's mission and values.

And so, what was President's solution to Mitchell's dilemma? Well, you get to read the book to find out. Like a review of a good movie about to be shown, this review is not about to spill the beans and ruin the excitement of how to avoid "death by meeting."

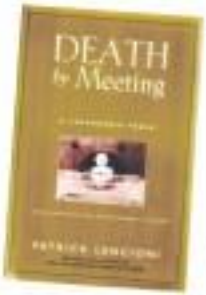
Book shows how to give life to boring meetings

"Death by Meeting"
By Patrick Lencioni
San Francisco, USA: Jossey-Bass
2004, 200 pages

By Regina Gidong Reyes

PHONE any self-respecting executive and three out of four times, chances are she would be in a meeting. This phenomenon would be quite normal in organizational life since meetings make up the bulk of man-agerial time. Managers need to constantly interact with subordinates, peers and superiors and meetings are the usual means of communication in the organization.

Article in



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Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso
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INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

The new Wizard behind 'Harry Potter'

DANIEL Radcliffe as Harry Potter with director Alfonso Cuarón

By Ruel S. de Vera

THERE'S a new wizard in town. In the upcoming "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban," several men enter the life of Harry Potter (Daniel Radcliffe), among them, the fugitive magician Sirius Black (Gary Oldman) and the new Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher, Professor Remus Lupin (David Thewlis).

But the most important new presence is the one behind the screen: Mexican director Alfonso Cuarón, who takes the helm from Chris Columbus in the third installment adapted from J.K. Rowling's beloved fantasy series. And he knows magic when he sees it.

Considered by some as the best Potter book, "Prisoner" is both a treasure and a challenge for any director, but Cuarón is at once the most natural and the most unexpected person to orchestrate the new high jinks at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.

At once auteur and hyphenate, the 42-year-old Cuarón has shown a dazzling capacity for cinematic sleight of hand. His first Hollywood movie was the tenderly magical 1995 adaptation of Frances Hodgson Burnett's "A Little Princess," which he followed up in

THE NEW C2

SCENES from "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban"

The new wi... Harry...

1998 with a sleek, modernized adaptation of Charles Dickens' "Great Expectations."

But it was Cuarón's next project, 2001's "Y Tu Mamá También," that held viewers captive. "Tambien," which Cuarón wrote and directed, was a humorous tale of teen boys' sexual coming of age while on a road trip in Mexico. Yet all of Cuarón's subsequent projects have been about a child's rite of passage, about the perils and murkiness of growing up.

But the real magic came when it was announced that Cuarón would direct the anticipated third film. After the built-built production and the announcement that veteran director Mike Newell would direct the fourth movie, "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire," Cuarón's take on the adventures of young wizard and his friends Ron (Rupert Grint) and Hermione (Emma Watson) is heading to a theater near you via supercharging broomstick.

Darker than the earlier films, "Prisoner" features not only the spooky Dementors but also Harry and company's efforts in facing the challenges of their third year at Hogwarts.

Through this exclusive e-mail interview with the inspired, the darling and creative Cuarón shares his thoughts about the upcoming movie, his previous time in Hogwarts and the many tricks up his own sleeve.

How exactly did you wind up directing "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban"? Were you a fan of the series to begin with?

When [producer] David [Heyman] sent me the script, I was very ignorant of the whole "Harry Potter" universe as I had been completely immersed in a previous movie and hadn't seen the movies or read the books. But when I read the script, I immediately wanted to read the book. I was just that captured by the material. It was undoubtedly next to become part of it.

[Chris Columbus] shouldn't [with] the first movies. Have you consciously decided to do something different with "Prisoner"? Or what have you decided to change or keep from the earlier Potter movies?

Well, it is inevitable, because I will only serve the material from my standpoint. Chris Columbus directed the previous two movies and we are two different directors and minds, and that shows in our approach to the material. Also the stories are evolving—Harry is a teen, and the material is getting darker and the kids are having a larger view on things. The tone of the books has changed. That is the great thing about the franchise, it evolves. There is a natural progression. I am sure Mike Newell's production of the fourth book will be quite different and hopefully better. I hopefully he will keep evolving it and the whole thing alive. The more that each film serves the books, the more that could "Harry Potter" film will benefit.

I wanted to keep the context of Hogwarts as present as the characters. Rather than having Hogwarts and Privet Drive as a backdrop for the drama of these characters, I wanted them to be instrumental. I wanted also to play more with the naturalism of the characters rather than just do three cgis. I'm not saying we don't have close-ups, we just have much less of them and we're trying to hold the shots for longer. The approach is wider, with fewer cuts, in some instances we did whole scenes in just one shot. When I did "A Little Princess," I shot completely from the point of view of the main character, so what you see was from the emotional point of view of the character. That means that everything was distorted by her emotions. I didn't want that in this movie. I wanted to follow Harry Potter's point of view but be objective about what he's going through—keeping it in line with his reality.

Columbus said he had great input from J.K. Rowling, but was mostly given free rein working on the films. How much control did you have or much input did you receive from Ms Rowling in the course of filming?

I met with [a couple of times. We talked about my approach to the third movie and she mentioned there were a couple of things that were important for her in the book. She's great, from the get-go she gave me all her blessings and freedom. She is also so eloquent in the universe that you have to do nothing but respect when she has something to say.

Did you have any specific concerns approaching this project or was there a specific message you wanted to send with the movie?

There was the ego aspect of it, how could I put myself into the next episode of a franchise? However, the material won me over and I found it very eloquent to translate the universe of the book. In I was confident in that playground. My friend, Guillermo del Toro, director of "Blade 2" and "Hellboy" said, "You should go for it but don't try to do your movie out of it. Just go and serve Harry Potter, go and serve the material."

How would you describe the roster on previous films?

It has been one of the most enjoyable creative experiences I have ever had.

Together with the returning

Directing phenomenon Alfonso Cuarón talks about the method and the magic behind 'The Prisoner of Azkaban'

zard behind Potter

GARY OLDMAN plays Sirius Black.

WITH RADCLIFFE are Emma Watson as Hermione Granger and Rupert Grint as Ron Weasley.

characters, Gary Oldman and Emma Thompson join this cast, making it a particularly formidable one. How did you feel about that?

I had really great new parts and I worked with actors I had always really wanted to work with. David Thewlis plays an amazing Professor Lupin, and I'm so happy with what Gary Oldman did as Sirius Black because it was a tough role in that he has to really fulfill the expectations of the people who are seeing him. Emma Thompson is the best women's, funny woman than I ever met in my life ... I had as much fun working with her. Timothy Spall—I always wanted to work with Timothy since I saw Secret Mike [adult film]. In terms of the style, what we tried to do was really ground it, make the acting style very naturalistic because we wanted to ground it in the emotion of these characters rather than the magic. We wanted to make a character-driven movie that has visual effects, and it was not tough in my final gross income material and great actors. What I didn't like about the scenes in Peters Drive should be like a Mike Leigh movie ... let's try and bring the best out of it, there's enough horror already in these characters. I prefer to have Harry Potter in a more grounded universe and then escape into the opposite of that, which is Hogwarts. Hogwarts is also a very grounded universe ... it respects its own rules.

What grounds everything in J.K. Rowling's material. I think the big, big success in the books is because all those characters have strong, grounded emotions. Their emotions are really human—that's what makes the books so great.

How was it working with Daniel, Rupert and Emma?

It has been so much fun, they are absolutely amazing. And it is a perfect situation to work with them on the movies. I know they are prepped and are wanting to take themselves seriously as actors, increasing more serious about the craft. They have been with companies also from an economical standpoint. They are now willing to go into the [unusual] material.

And like the actors themselves, the characters of Harry, Ron and Hermione did some growing up as well. How does this element fit into the movies?

Yeah, that is priceless because of two things. One is they are very generous because they lend that to the characters, and secondly, because there is a lot of stuff that their actions created, and it allows you to build it and make the division as you see it happen.

What was the biggest challenge you faced in filming "Prisoner"?

There were action/fun scenes difficult because of the length of the shoots, for example, the Hunting Shack shot forever. We shot forever because it was a very long scene that incorporated a lot of issues and we suffered some scheduling problems. The challenge was to do a whole action scene when you don't have all the stuff, like doing a scene with plasma bombing energy you don't have the glasses so you have the actors running around. Daniel Radcliffe was amazing—he has such an amazing visual imagination and he understands the rules as well, it's easy with him because you can ask them to make believe. They can do that immediately but it's not so easy for the adults. With the three kids, I just recruited them in the best moments. They had done two big movies before, they understood everything about the technical aspects, the craft around them, and they were 13 years old—that means that they are at an age where they start using themselves seriously as actors and that they want to learn and improve their craft. I'm so thankful for these guys because they really were fun to, they really wanted to go beyond what they had done before. So example, previously they used to break up the shoot because they had a problem remembering their lines. This time they were older, more focused, in the beginning, they were a little scared because they hadn't done it before, but then they started doing and enjoying it. Now Mike Newell, director of the fourth movie, is going to receive them already knowing the technical aspects and having done an "emotional workshop." Mike is such a perfectionist in terms of performance, after number four, these kids are going to be the best actors in England! It's really exciting about what Mike is going to do with these kids.

And what is next for you after 'Prisoner of Azkaban'?

Sleeping ... many years of it on a tiny beach.

What is it about Harry Potter and his world that has captured imaginations around the world?

As with all great storytelling, the books are very layered and you can have different interpretations of the material. I like what J.K. Rowling did in that it was a very grounded universe, not only emotionally but also socially. It's magical but it's also a real place. There is a social context of the modern world in her fantasy.

Warner Bros.' "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban" opens in Metro Manila theaters on June 2.

TANTRIC experience

Cold, cold beer served here

By Vanessa Arellano Dexter

THERE seems normally nothing remarkable about Tagaytay that sets it apart from other places in the country. But there are those places that can even the tedious effort of working there out will stop you. Graced here is Sweeny 7 Café.

From the tree-lush Olaí opens into the quiescent home turned bar, stepping into the café is like being transported into a psychedelic realm. The experience is almost tantric. You would want to sink into the homey, plush, hide-in-the-wall couches and forget about the reality that lies outside.

Owners Toby Alfonsolo, 40, and Ms Ding Cariaga, and family member Dee Lagos converted the old home into a theme to isolated reality, with artifacts and memorabilia pieces filling the place and making it look like a gallery.

On the walls are cultural pieces of popular art, as well as a photo gallery of guest customers smiling to pick their poses in front of the camera for the "hall of fame."

The café, which opened in 2000, is patronized by both free-wheeling artist types and white-collar alike alike. Credit that to the lounge-y atmosphere and that rice even the tedious effort of working there out will stop you. Graced here is Sweeny 7 Café.

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The food is a mix of Filipino, Oriental and Italian cuisine. Some specialties include the Chicken Marsala—deep-fried chicken in red wine gravy that comes with pasta or rice—and Chicken Cacciatore, which is chicken sautéed in white wine, while the cold, cold beer costs between P52 and P65. The place can hold 50 to 100 guests for special occasions like acoustic jams or poetry readings.

Sweeny 7 Café is located at the corner of Sumaclay and Tagaytay Rizal, New Manila and is open from Monday to Saturday from 6 p.m. to around 2 a.m. Call 4104087.

ENJOY the lounge-y atmosphere.

SHOPPE to individuality

Should I confront my cheating BF?

Dear Mark and Sep,

Hi, just call me Jasmeah. I'm 20 years old. My boyfriend has another girlfriend, but he doesn't know that I'm already aware of it. I want to confront him, but I don't think I can because I love him and I don't want to lose him. We've been together for almost three years now.

What shall I do or find I will not lose him and he will be thoughtful again? I don't remember doing anything wrong to him. Please help me. (MOMAH)

Mike Mark Lifana & Sepsander Mabaza

Ladies and gentlemen, the latest member of Martyrs Anonymous, Jasmeah!

Of course, you want to confront him. And another of course, you should confront him. You're not blind or deaf and you should not go on acting as if you don't know you're not hurt or that it doesn't matter.

Be brave and open to the frantic possibility that he would want to say farewell if you go and confront him. Whether you go dead, deadmo or "Sin, you two-timing scout!" doesn't matter much because you're already toast to him.

You don't completely have him anymore. You have lost him already. So easy for cobbling him with you, but that doesn't mean he's all yours. You might have been the perfect girlfriend or you may have had amnesia, but he has his reasons for going for another girl.

What you need to do now is passionately place your left hand on your chest and answer these questions as honest as possible: am I really to share him with another girl, someone who might be prettier, wiser, more intelligent and more benevolent than I am? If he stays, does that mean that he still loves me? Have I not lost him yet? Will he ever be thoughtful and loving again?

Then, go on to: Why am I letting him do these terribly hurtful things to me? Why not let go of that jerk? Why not go for someone who wants me? Why not? Why not? Why do I suddenly remember Hillary Duff?

MAME

My fit has another GF, should I confront him? If I pointed you, would you not bleed? If I smiled you, would you not laugh? If you were seriously asking me this question, would I not have rolled my eyes in exasperation and thrilled, "Sin, of course!"?

The last time I checked, monogamy is still the norm in relationships and righteous anger is still a good motivator for putting things in right.

Jasmeah, before you figure out what you have to do in order to get this guy back, allow yourself to get angry at him first for being such a jerk-off, a bastard, a male anchor of **hole.

Quit asking yourself what you have done wrong. You already have a suspect in your hands and the only things left to ask is why the hell did he cheat on you.

That blueprint for the truth will definitely not be easy, so you have to be prepared. Get ready to wade through his truckload of initial denials and have everyone, and he no-nonsense should you let yourself be swayed by them. Not to the bottom of his cheating ways and expect nothing less because you deserve nothing less.

Then, if pride will have the better of you—and the stomach—to take him back after all that he's done, then I guess it really is a case of different strokes for different folks, and I can't help you with that anymore. But let the rules of what's still sacred and decent in relationships, not yourself, this question really hasn't. Why would you still want someone who apparently thinks so little of you to treat you like any?

SEPTEMBER

E-mail the writers at markandsep@yahoo.com

DYNAMOMC. Bonnie Cruz at the MTV Grind party

ICY MOVES. The CCP Lobster Pop Squad... winner of the Mascaldi Ice Dia Mare dance award, with city Tibaka-a-tubbo and Hanks

MAE. Lobster pop B dancesand take his groove.

FRIENDLY ENCOUNTER. Paolo Arnaiz and Amanda Griffin

FASHION FORCE. Pizza Manangahon with the Mascaldi Ice cube chicks

SHAKE IT, BABY! Paolo Pedroso and Mich Hija Vj Karel Mangaoil

Just shake it

A FUNNY thing happened outside the U bar last week. It was the usual Tuesday R&B night, and the crowd was filled with the usual assortment bouncing to their favorite tunes. Outside was a standing area, so I decided to hang inside Levale V's voracious hot spot.

While DJ Ballbop Jeff was at his peak spinning his music, two men caught each other's eye on the dance floor. (It's not what you're thinking...I'm not going there.) Both gave each other evil looks. Then one called the other a wannabe, while the other just leapt quiet, opting to outdance the guy who was taunting him.

Five minutes after, I looked at the dance floor and saw a "dance-off" erupting in the center of the dance floor. Think "Footloose" or the dance scene from "Friends and Enemies" (or Stacie Orrico's latest video), or "West Side Story." It depends on what generation you're from and you'll know exactly what I mean.

It went on for quite some time, with both gentlemen displaying their stuff. Turned out both were expert breakdancers. Some other men, then tried to outdo each other—with matching words and actions meant to demoralize each other. It was war. The crowd cheered for their bets and wondered with bated breath, how Scottie and wacky glasses is won.

Just it is on, and they were still at it. Later, when the other guy got tired, he realized that his competition was really good. In the end, they both shook hands, with the "winner" still looking smug, while the other one just said, "I think I had two months outside."

I heard someone comment, "Wow! What a way to fight...imagine if Bush and Saddam just danced it off, instead of going to war." And for that matter, GMA and PJ! (doing the Cube beat vs. "One-Two"?), Kanye Santos and Andrea Del Rosario and every other worthwhile pumped-up pair the rule of our world.

So shake shake shake, just shake it!

The icy grind

Talk about shaking, hearty-dance beats filled up the summer's grinding hot events. And as we say goodbye to the heat and welcome the rain (boo), let us look back and follow the party trail of the last few months.

I was a judge for the "best grinders" at the MTV Grind at the Tent, with Mascaldi Ice among the sponsors. I had one sip and danced the night away. (I'm trying to cut down on my alcohol.) with Patricia Javier and Dr. Vicki Belo, as co-judges.

Tim Tan

Another event noteworthy among the cross-country summer bonanzas was Smirnoff Ice's "Party a la Antonia 100" at the Bellarmine Field at the Ateneo De Manila grounds. An inverse tradition, this time it gathered 1,500 fun and funky denizens who all got a coffee high as they grooved to heavy beats.

From there I hopped over to Cloudia's Dolphin Park, where jammers soaked their hands in the music of Jeffrey and Anton Hidalgo, Ajax and Nina, Jimmy Bondoc and Keith Bimbo! "Fizzy with Smirnoff Ice" celebrated carnival and caffeine shift in greater heights.

There were other coffee groundbreaking events—from cheering competitions (part of the 99.5 RT Summer Blast) to reggae shindigs. Uno@92.3's Caribbean Sunset Reggae by the Bay party? and Beachcombing with Jessica Soho in Boracay.

Had enough? So a fitting finale, an all-night jive happened at Eastwood City with Tribalistas' techno-tribal percussion-infused music, spotted were Peacock Inc.'s cuties Paolo Bhadwal, Jose Lobo (who's flying to the Dominican Republic as the only pal from date to be a "searcher" in the MTV dating show "Disclosed") and Miss V's Karel Mangaoil.

I think I'm too wired for words (because of the iced coffee, mind you). I'm dancing as we speak.

This week's wet areas

The concert scene is hot, hot, hot. Britney was supposed to come, but her fiancé-star was cancelled. Linkin Park is confirmed to arrive in June, with Jag Jesus underscoring the tour.

Pop-jazz phenomenon Tech and Peter will be in town on May 21-22 to perform at the Meralco Theater. Witness the fiery sound of Tech's guitar coupled with Pete's dreamy cool vocal power. From whimpery ballads to playful caring, their music is all about a man and a woman making a lifetime of beautiful music together.

For tickets, call SM Ticketnet at 9115555.

More to come—as rock on, dear partygoers!

GETTING JIGGY. Mark Reyes entertains his way to win Tina Go but.

OFF TO THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC. Our very own Ines Litton

ICE KICK. Mark Reyes, Shalimar Salas and Maxine Policarpio

K-BOYS RULE! Nico Quintana, another Grind winner